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THE VEDANTA KESARI



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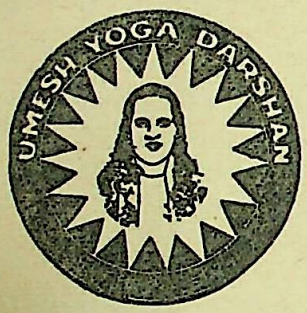
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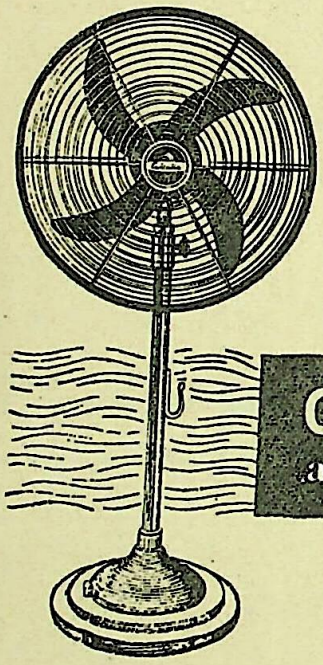
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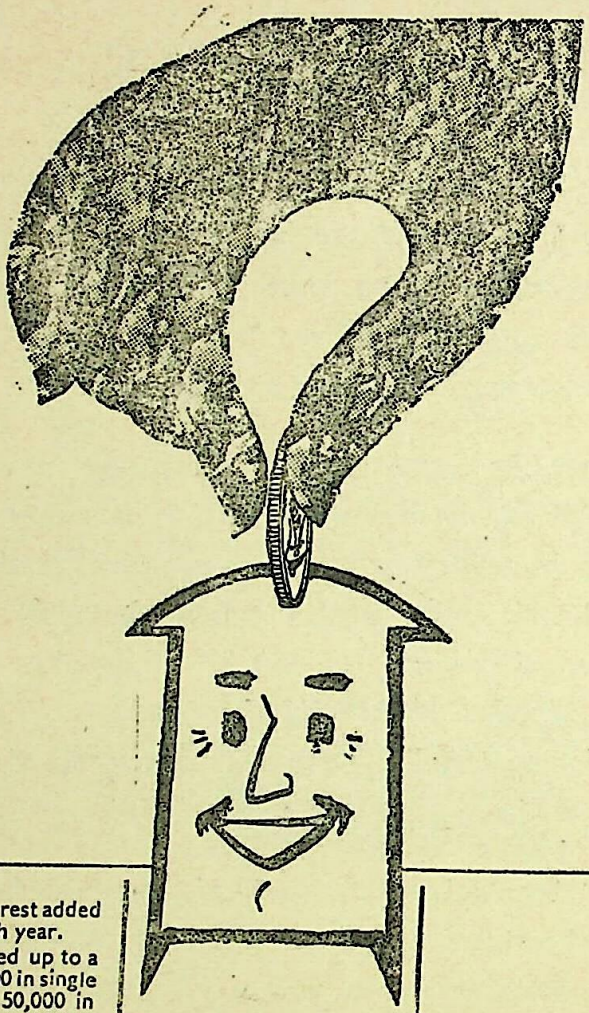
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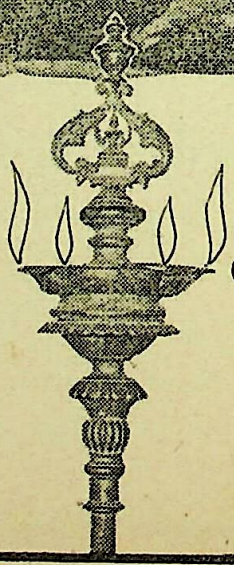
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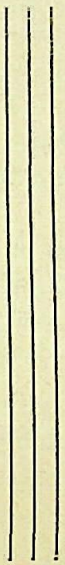
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.... Be bold and face
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Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. LIII MAY 1966 No. 1

PARAMĀRTHASĀRA*

परं परस्याःप्रकृतेरनादिमेकं निविष्टं बहुधा गुहासु। सर्वालयं सर्वचराचरस्थं त्वामेव विष्णुं शरणं प्रपद्ये ॥ १ ॥

1. O Viṣṇu who are superior to the primal Prakṛti (Māyā), who are beginningless and One, who has penetrated into the myriads of caves, forms, who are the ground of everything, who are residing in all things movable and immovable, in You alone do I seek refuge.

NOTES : It was the tradition of the Indian philosophers of yore to invoke the blessings of God and the Guru before the commencement of their treatises, so that their work may progress without hindrance and the purpose for which the treatise was attempted may fully be served. Now this invocatory verse while serving the above purport also gives out the trend of the treatise. *Viṣṇu* here means the Paramatman who is always present as one's own immediate Self, the ever blissful and Absolute Consciousness.

Superior to Primal Prakṛti : *Prakṛti*, also called Māyā, is the primal cause of the universe. Even this Primal Nature is inert, without consciousness, and non-existent by itself. As it is the Paramatman who endows existence and power unto this *Prakṛti* He is naturally transcending it. In other words *Prakṛti* is His power (*śakti*) and is dependent on Him. Nowhere in the world is power seen to exist by itself. For if power were to exist independently of the possessor then the capacity to possess power would not be seen. But this is against experience. This conclusively proves that *Prakṛti* is dependent on Paramatman for its functioning as well as its very existence. Further, Paramatman, though

*The authorship of *Paramārthasāra* is ascribed to Śri Ādi Śesha. But whether this Ādi Śesha is the mythical serpent, who is said to hold the universe on his hood or Patanjali, who is traditionally believed to be an incarnation of Ādi Śesha we leave the research scholars to find out. We shall attempt here to give the readers a free translation of this excellent work, which in a brief compass of 85 verses has given the essence of the Advaitic concept of God and creation. We have followed herein the text, and commentary thereon by Raghavananda, published under the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series (12). 1911, by the then Government of Travancore.

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of the nature of one taste (*eka rasaḥ*) and ever blissful, having recourse to this power of His is ever present as the Self in all beings — beginning from *Mahat* and ending with Prithivi, as well as their several modifications, as also in the individual and collective bodies — and all their extra-ordinary manifestations. Therefore such a Lord is sought as shelter.

Beginninglessness of Paramatman is one of the causes of His superiority over nature. The meaning, however, is that He is 'ever existent'.

OBJECTION : Well, is not primality also attributed to *Prakṛti*? If it had origination primality of Nature will prove false. The Śruti itself says : 'There is then one unborn, of the nature of red, white and black, who creates numerous offsprings of the same nature'. अजामेकां लोहितशुक्लकृष्णां बह्वीः प्रजाः सृजमानां सरूपाः । (*Śvetāśvatara Up.*, IV. 5). Therefore how can you say that Paramatman is more primal.

REPLY : Paramatman is *One*, i.e. He is independent. Though *Prakṛti* is beginningless, as it is inert, it has no independent existence or capacity to function by itself. But Paramatman being Consciousness is self-existent. This is His pre-eminence. Śruti also says : 'Superior than the unmanifest is the Puruṣa. There is nothing beyond Puruṣa. He is the culmination and the highest goal'.

अव्यक्तात् पुरुषः परः। पुरुषान्न पर किञ्चित्सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः ॥
(*Kaṭha Up.*, I. iii. 11).

Or the word *One* may be interpreted as the reason for primality, i.e. He is without a second. As there is nothing existing other than Him, His self-existence as also His being a conscious principle are established. Therefore also His primality is proved.

Anticipating the objection : that *Jīvas* being innumerable and as He shines through those forms how is it feasible to posit His oneness, the verse says He who '*has penetrated into myriads of caves*'. As Māyā like an unexplorable cave, is inexpressible in the words 'existent' or 'non-existent' it is termed a cave. The plural *caves* is used with reference to the fragments of Māyā such as *sattva* etc. The Lord though one appears as many, as He shines through countless *Jīvas*, hence the plural is used. The supporting scriptural passage for this statement is : 'The Lord on account of Māyā is perceived as manifold'. इन्द्रो मायाभिः पुरुरूप ईयते ।(Br. Up., II. v. 19).

He is also the ground of everything : the bestower of consciousness and existence, i.e. the material cause. Because He is residing in all, the movable and the immovable He is the ground of eveything, i.e. one who pervades all bodies as the Lord.

By the words 'You Viṣṇu alone' the identity of Ātman and Brahman which is the subject matter of Vedanta as also of this treatise is indicated. But this truth is not known to all. When this knowledge dawns, it turns out to be the most beneficial. For it gives one the experience of endless

(*Continued on page* 7)

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STRENGTH : THE BASIS OF LIFE

If we happen to traverse through the pages of history, all the world over, we shall invariably find that prosperity and glory opened up before the strong, and the weak and the cowards went to the wall. Empires have risen with the strength of the particular people and dwindled and died with their weakness. Darwin's theory, 'survival of the fittest' which has been so well proved in the sub-human species illustrates this fact to a large extent. Probably, physical strength alone could not prove even Darwin's theory. Because, if we take into consideration the recent stipulations of science, that there existed in a remote past such gigantic animals like the dinosaur which have become extinct now, we cannot but admit that their very gigantic forms which restricted their movements made them vulnerable to attack and destruction by smaller and more agile beings. So it is not physical strength alone that gains supremacy. Indian history of the past few centuries will show how some small hordes were able to run over the whole land. What was it due to but our own disunity which was the most vulnerable spot that the conqueror chose to exploit!

The current events in the world too show that might still rules though in a different mask. A nation, therefore, has to be strong if it is to remain independent and ward off the grasping hands of the neighbours from its territories. Strength is also a necessity for even the internal development of a nation. The weak may be pitied but the strong alone will be respected. And anything that is received without a requisite repayment in some form or other will bear down heavily on the recipient. It is a debt and an obligation.

This preamble has been to show that what law holds good in the world outside, is applicable to the regions of the mind and soul too, but with the difference that in the latter case one has also to possess moral and spiritual excellences. The Upaniṣads declare : This Ātman cannot be attained by the weak.[1] Strength of the muscles alone will have nothing to do with the inner world, nor intellectual power keep the mind from wandering. It is the life righteously lived, which generates a moral force and which runs as a precursor to the dawn of a higher mode of life — the life of the spirit — that is spoken of in this statement of the Upaniṣads as strength. In it all these types of strength are included and none is excluded. Physical strength is as important to withstand the strain of spiritual disciplines one has to undergo, as intellectual acumen is incumbent to understand the subtle truths of religion. In secular and political pursuits intellectual power may be put to the meanest possible use, and yet one may succeed in one's endeavour in those fields. But the way of the spirit is quite different. An inch you swerve from the right path and a thousand feet away will you be flung from it — narrow is the way of righteousness, like the sharp edge of a razor, as the Upaniṣads describe it. Or as Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'Man does not know what it is that causes his downfall'. He then illustrates this by an example : 'Once, while going to the Fort,[2] I could not see at all that I was driving down a sloping road ; but when the carriage went inside the Fort I realized how far down I had come'. That is the way one slides from the right path little by little, imperceptibly, unknowingly, so much so that when one comes to know of it, one has travelled a long way down the wrong path. The allurements of the world are many and strong and therefore one has not only to be physically fit, but mentally alert and morally toned up to resist them.

An appreciation of Naciketa by Yama, the king of death, when the former refused to be drawn and entangled by the rewards of the

[1] नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः ॥
— *Mundaka Up.*, III. ii. 4.

[2] The reference is to the Fort in Calcutta.

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earth and heaven that were offered to him, will bear evidence as to the importance that is laid on the strength of the mind to deny oneself the luxuries, comforts and enjoyments that can be had here or hereafter. Yama is profuse in the praise of Naciketa. Again, and again, amidst his teaching he stops and puts in a word of encomium about Naciketa's self-denial. Here are his words : 'You have discarded, after well discerning, all that was offered to you in the shape of pleasing and pleasurable things. You have not deigned to accept this wealth, which is another name for transmigration, in which the majority of mankind choose to sink.'[3] 'I wish there was some one among us, my disciples, who could be an inquirer like you.'[4] Again, 'I deem that the portals of Liberation are open to Naciketa'.[5] All this points out how lofty is that power and how mighty and covetable is that strength which in the end endows us with a blissful life for ever.

Here the sophisticated may think : 'If it is such a botheration, such a hard task, if it is so impossible a thing to realize an unknown God, why not try to make the world more and more perfect ? Overwhelmed by the magnitude of the task of realization, man seeks perfection in an imperfect world ; happiness in a vale of misery. For the world is an existence of contraries. It is an imbalance in the *gunas* (substantive forces), *sattva, rajas* and *tamas,* of Prakṛti that has caused the projection of the universe. When that balance will be regained there will not be this manifested universe. It will be resolved into its cause, the Prakṛti. But still man thinks that he can progressively improve the world phenomena. Swami Vivekananda, speaking of progress remarks, 'To live in the world where it is all good and no evil, is what Sanskrit logicians call a "dream in the air".' Continuing he says, 'Another theory, in modern times, has been presented by many schools, that man's destiny is to go on always improving, always struggling onwards but never reaching the goal'. Commenting on this theory he concludes, 'This statement, though apparently very nice, is also absurd, because there is no such thing as a motion in a straight line. Every motion is in a circle. A straight line infinitely projected must end in a circle. Therefore, this idea that the destiny of man is progressing ever forward and forward and never stopping is absurd'. So to seek perfection in the created world is a wild goose chase. Is then all work to improve the world-condition to be given up ? The answer is no ; the efforts to help the world in every possible way are to be continued. At the same time it should be remembered that we do not actually help the world but help ourselves to become more liberal in our outlook on life. Again, we cannot cease from work, cannot even live without work. When it is so, is it not better for man to do something good instead of becoming more and more selfish and self-seeking ?

II

Having seen that there is no happiness in the created world, the sages sought it in the Uncreated, by cultivating dispassion towards the things of the creation. 'Having examined the worlds attainable by actions a Brahmana (a man of wisdom) should inculcate dispassion. For the Uncreated cannot be had by sacrifices, by acts,'[6] says the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad.* Now, as it is a long journey from the created to the Uncreated, the equipment required also should be commensurate with the hazards and situations one may meet on the way. For in the world also we note that the equipment of a mountain expeditioner is not the same as a North Pole explorer nor like that of a space

[3] स त्वं प्रियान् प्रियरूपाँश्च कामानभिध्यायन्नचिकेतोऽत्यस्राक्षीः । नैताँ सृंकां वित्तमयीमवाप्तो यस्यां मज्जन्ति बहवो मनुष्याः ॥ —*Katha Up.,* 2.3.

[4] त्वादृङ्नो भूयान्नचिकेतः पृष्टा । —*Ibid.,* 2.9.

[5] विवृतँ सद्म नचिकेतसं मन्ये ।—*Ibid.,* 2. 16.

[6] परीक्ष्य लोकान्कर्मचितान्ब्राह्मणो निर्वेदमायान्नास्त्यकृतः कृतेन । —*Mundaka Up.,* I. ii. 12.

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walker. The expedition into the Unknown, has its own peculiar requirements. We have already said that all types of strength were essential for spiritual growth. We can understand what is meant by physical strength and intellectual acumen. But what is moral strength? What is spiritual force?

We need not discuss here the term 'moral' from the point of view of society. For there can be no one standard for all countries and all societies and for all time. We are here concerned with that which leads to a religious life. There are some fundamentals on which even a society is dependent, or to be more explicit, on which its growth, its usefulness to the world as a whole and its glory rest. And these are common to the spiritual life also. For when we say society we are going into an abstract construction, but what is society but a collection of individuals? So, it is the individuals, who constitute society, that are expected to maintain certain norms. And one among these norms is truth. Here again, there may be an endless controversy as how far one should be truthful and so on. Giving a go-by to this controversy we shall pin-point our attention to the necessity of observing truth. Allowing every margin to the prevalence of falsehood, in the life of man, we find that there is an element of truth behind the universe, and it is this truth which upholds it. Śri Śankara in his Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya aptly observes : 'All transactions in the world are through the combination of *satya* (truth) and *anṛta* (untruth)'.[7] Śankara might have stated this truth from a higher plane of consciousness, but even from the lower standpoint it is found to be true.

Swami Vivekananda, speaking about the potency of truth, remarks : 'Truth is like a corrosive substance. It can penetrate everything, soft things quickly and even hard granite rocks slowly but surely. No one can resist it'. We all know that ultimately 'truth alone triumphs and not untruth'.[8] But such is the lure of wealth and the like that though repeatedly reminded of this fact we forget it at the moment. Perhaps the readers will be wondering what connection has this truth to do with our subject matter. However, if we remember that truth forms the moral base on which the structure of society is built it will not be difficult to relate the two. In the religious field too moral goodness must precede the spiritual hankering. Besides, truth is an element of the spiritual life. It makes one courageous, whereas falsehood transforms us into cowards. With truth one can face tribulations bravely and that is what made the martyrs live and die for their cause cheerfully.

The second equipment that is necessary for our journey is dispassion towards the transient things. There should not even be lingering back-glances on what has been once discarded. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the passions leave man immediately he resolves to lead a spiritual life. The meaning is that the passions should not be entertained, even when they arise ; courting them would be dangerous.

The third requirement is chastity. There is a beautiful story in the Upaniṣads to illustrate the value of Brahmacharya as well as the necessity to cultivate other virtues. Once the gods, men and demons, all his progeny, went to Prajāpati and lived with him the life of continence. After their term of *brahmacharya* the gods asked him, 'Tell us how we can conduct ourselves in life'. Prajāpati uttered the letter '*da*' and asked them whether they had understood the meaning of his teaching. They replied that they had, that he meant that they should control themselves. He said, 'Yes, it is so ; you have understood well'. The gods are denizens of the heaven and given to great deal of enjoyment. After living the life of *brahmacharya* with the teacher their eyes of knowledge had opened, they had come to

[7] सत्यानृते मिथुनीकृत्य नैसर्गिकोऽयं लोकव्यवहारः ॥
— *Adhyasa Bhasya.*

[8] सत्यमेव जयते नानृतम् ॥
— *Mundaka Up.*, III. i. 6.

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know of their own defects and hence had no difficulty in comprehending what Prajāpati expected of them.

Then the men said to him, 'Please instruct us'. To them too he repeated the syllable '*da*' and asked them whether they understood the meaning of what he had said. They said they had understood him; that he meant that they should *give*. 'Yes, it is so; you have understood,' said he. Men usually are of the hoarding nature. Man puts by things thinking it is only for a rainy day, but it is not always so. More often than not his avarice makes him self-centred and callous towards others' sufferings. After having lived the life of continence with the Lord of creatures the men came to know wherein was their fault and could understand the cryptic message so easily.

Lastly the demons said 'Please instruct us'. To them he said '*da*', and asked whether they had understood him. They replied, 'We have; you ask us to be compassionate'. 'Yes, so it is; you have understood well', said he. The demons are cruel and always indulging in killing, so to them the message of Prajāpati was to be compassionate towards beings. The Upaniṣad says that this divine message is even now being transmitted to us by means of the thunder, in its roar '*da*' '*da*' '*da*', 'Control yourselves', 'Give' and 'Have compassion'.[9] In Sanskrit all the three words representing the above three meanings begin with the letter '*da*' viz., *dāmyata, datta,* and *dayadhwam* respectively.

What is obviously evident from the story is that *brahmacharya,* a life of continence and restraint, is essential for the religious. Men cannot find out their own drawbacks until they have lived a life of continence. And once they know their defects it is easy for them to get over them when they are commanded to do so by the teacher. The second conclusion is that we have to inculcate all the three virtues mentioned herein in order to be morally uplifted. For it is these virtues that form into a moral force in man — a force that opens further and new vistas of a higher life. What a mere intellectual man, a mere scholar, can comprehend but not experience, that Self-knowledge becomes easily accessible to a man of virtues by a little practice. For morality is the ground of all spiritual evolution. 'He who has not desisted from wicked actions, has not controlled himself, nor has a collected mind, nor whose mind is restless can ever attain Brahman by knowledge,'[10] says the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. Sri Ramakrishna as it were echoes these very statements of the Vedas when he says: 'The first sign of knowledge is a peaceful nature and second is the absence of egotism'. About mere scholars, without discrimination and dispassion, he had a very poor opinion. He used to say, 'Kites and vultures soar very high but they keep their gaze fixed on the charnel pit. What I mean is that these pundits — who merely talk words of wisdom and do not live up to them — are attached to the world, to lust and greed. If I hear that pundits are practising discrimination and dispassion, then I fear them. Otherwise I look upon them as mere straw'. Intellectualism and erudition to explain the scriptures without yearning for God does not make for liberation, though they may bring one all the worldly goods, name and fame.[11]

III

Now, one should not stop with being morally good. It is only a foundation. And a foundation however strong is not able to give us shelter from sun, wind and rain, if there is no superstructure on it, just as a ship though large and built with all modern devices to weather gales and storms cannot be a good means to cross the ocean, if its engines fail

[9] *Brihadaranyaka Up.* V. ii.

[10] नाविरतो दुश्चरितान्नाशान्तो नासमाहितः ।
नाशान्तमानसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैनमाप्नुयात् ॥
— *Katha Up.*, 2.24.

[11] Refer also to the following sloka in the *Vivekacudamani* of Sri Sankaracharya.
वाग्वैखरी शब्दझरी शास्त्रव्याख्यानकौशलम् ।
वैदुष्यं विदुषां तद्वत् भुक्तये न तु मुक्तये ॥

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or it puts in an harbour which is not its destination. The superstructure is spiritual life and when it is built on a strong moral base there is no danger of its collapse.

A life of devotion to God with firm faith and all the attendant virtues is the life of the spirit for a devotee ; to a follower of the *jñāna marga* it is to look upon every being as the manifestation of the One Divine Principle, Brahman and the continuous attempt on his part to be in communion with that One. The strength born out of leading such a life is not only beneficial to the person who practises but also to those who come in contact with him as well. Swami Vivekananda, speaking of such a strength, says, 'Strength is the idea which is raising the brute unto man, and man unto God'. In the *Kena Upaniṣad* is a story introduced to illustrate this fact. Once Brahman obtained victory for the gods over the demons and the former thought that they themselves had won the victory and that it was their own glory. But in order to remove this wrong notion of the *devas*, Brahman appeared before them in the form of a Yakṣa, an effulgent being. The *devas*, afraid and at the same time anxious to know who that being was, deputed Agni and Vāyu successively to ascertain about It. In its presence they were struck dumb and when the Yakṣa asked who they were and what was their special prowess, Agni said that he could burn whatever there was in the world and Vāyu said that he could blow away everything. The Yakṣa placed a straw before them and asked Agni to burn it, which with all his might he could not do. He asked Vāyu to blow away the straw but Vāyu could not move it. They returned thus discomfited to the gods and Indra then approached It, but Brahman did not even deign to give an interview to him but vanished from his sight. Indra, however, did not go away from the place but stayed on and meditated as to who that being could be. Finding him eager to know about the Yakṣa, the Brahma-Vidyā itself in the form of a beautiful woman appeared there. Indra asked of her who that Yakṣa was who had appeared and then vanished. She teaches him that it was Brahman, because of whom they had won the victory and had falsely been elated considering the victory as their own.[12] Thus it is seen that all source of strength is Brahman. Because of His presence in the universe, in all that is living and moving and in all that is immovable also, the world phenomena goes on. He is therefore, the foundation, the basis of life.

[12] Refer *Kenopanishad*, III. 1-12 & IV-1.

PARAMĀRTHASĀRA

(*Continued from page* 2)

and unbroken bliss, which cuts off all bondage to the world and gives one emancipation. One who is desirous to experience such a bliss is the competent student. The connection remains revealed by the indication of the subject matter of the treatise : the identity of Ātman and Brahman, is to be known and the book gives the evidence that establishes it. Thus the four questions, *anubandha catuṣṭaya*, are all answered.

DOUBT : If the self is Viṣṇu Himself why do people think 'I am a man' instead of experiencing 'I am Brahman'? Because of their not pondering over the matter — this is explained in the next verse.

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THE HEART OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA

SWAMI TAPASYANANDA

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THE *Bhagavad Gītā* is a great text with its teachings scattered through eighteen chapters. Just as an organism has got a heart, representing the central core that regulates and controls the rest of its body, this great scripture too has one chapter to which devotees in search of its quintessence have to turn. This distinction of being the heart of the *Gītā* goes to the fifteenth chapter, which has been described by Bhagavan Himself as the '*Śāstra*' even in this great text accepted as setting forth the essence of the Vedas.

The fifteenth chapter gives us a complete world-view sufficient in itself as a guidance to man in his evolution to the highest spiritual goal. It starts with the famous figure of the fabled Aśwattha tree (Peepal) with its root above and branches spreading below. To those creatures living on its spreading branches covered with thick foliage, the roots situated above are invisible, and the tree appears to be a supportless self-existent growth. All the denizens of the different spheres, gross and subtle, including man inhabiting the earth, are like birds perched on the vast and mysterious peepal tree of this manifested universe, engrossed in its delights and completely ignorant of its supporting roots, the Transcendent Being (the *Ūrdhva*, the Above). Again the Aśwattha, according to the etymological meaning of the expression, is that which does not survive even a night and is therefore extremely transitory, but yet it is described as 'Avyaya', 'Undecaying'. It is thereby suggested that all the individual combinations, be they atoms or stellar systems, living or non-living beings, gods or men, constitute an ever-changing flux that does not remain the same even for a moment, but yet this creative process as a whole, evolving newer and newer forms, is an unending flow (Avyaya). But those who are involved in it, however, cannot grasp its real nature as described, nor can they perceive its origin, its end or its supporting Essence — the Supreme Being, into the invisible heights of whose subtility its roots shadow off as if into nothingness. Man, therefore, forgets the Lord, his invisible but ever-present source and substratum, and clings to the world and the life therein as an *end* in itself.

Spiritual life starts with the severance of this clinging to the world as an *end* in itself by means of the sword of non-attachment and renunciation. In an earnest act of self-surrender, the aspirant dedicates himself to the Supreme Being, declaring: 'I seek shelter in that Original Being from whom this creative process and redemptive grace have eternally been flowing'.

It is absolute self-surrender that generates illumination, as the Lord has declared elsewhere: 'He who seeks shelter in Me overcomes this ignorance which is otherwise impossible to dispel'. But self-surrender, to become unreserved and absolute, has to be nurtured by spiritual discipline, and the signs of one who has truly surrendered himself to the Lord is that he becomes 'devoid of self-importance and delusion, overcomes worldly attachments, becomes ever-devoted to spiritual practices, turns his face away from desires and ambition, and becomes indifferent to pleasures and pains'. Such an aspirant attains to the Divine status, which is Self-luminous Consciousness free from ignorance, decay or downfall.

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It is an aspect of the Divine Spirit that appears as the Jīva, the individual centre of Consciousness, in the world of living beings. Whenever the Jīva attains to a physical body or discards it for another, he carries with him the subtle body of mind and senses drawn from the fine elements of Prakṛti (Matter), just as air carries with it the subtle essence of smell as it passes from one object to another. The ignorant do not recognize the Divine Spark when he departs from the body or stays in it or enjoys objects of the senses through the body. They believe the body to be the whole reality in man, but those endowed with the eye of Knowledge recognize him as distinct from the body.

Eternal Nature too is the manifestation of the Divine Glory, and therefore a symbol of His Existence. In the power and glory of the luminous galaxies in the heavens, in the gravitational power that supports all beings, in the climatic conditions that help the growth of succulent vegetation, in the digestive and other biological functions of animal life, in the powers of thought, memory and other faculties of the human mind and in the illuminating wisdom of the sacred scriptures, we see sure and indisputable signs of His Existence. They declare His might and mystery.

In this world of manifestation there are two categories of existence — Kṣara (the changeful) and Akṣara (the changeless). The Kṣara consists of all combinations which constitute the ever-changing forms in this manifold universe. The Akṣara is that primordial creative energy which transforms itself into all these combinations while remaining steady and unchanging in its causal nature, just like gold which remains the same in the midst of all its transformations into ornaments of various shape. Superior to, and distinct from, these but yet permeating and supporting the whole universe of gross and subtle vibrations, is the third entity known as the Paramātma, the Supreme Spirit. He transcends both the Kṣara and the Akṣara — the ever-changeful world of forms and the eternal cosmic energy that expresses itself as these forms. He is the Supreme Being. He transcends all, yet He is the Indweller, Supporter, and Master of everything gross and subtle. He is therefore called in the Vedas and the Scriptures of the world as the Puruṣottama, the Supreme Being. The undeluded aspirant who grasps the truth of the Puruṣottama, gains wisdom, and worships the Supreme Being as universally present in everything. Such a person alone can be considered as really intelligent and as having fulfilled his real duty in life.

Now if there is a way out of this trouble, it is within ourselves. We are always trying to realize the reality. Instinctively we are always trying to do that. It is creation in the human soul that covers up God; that is why there is so much difference in God-ideals. Only when creation stops can we find the Absolute. The Absolute is in the soul, not in creation. So by stopping creation we come to know the Absolute. When we think of ourselves, we think of the body, and when we think of God, we think of Him as body. To stop the gyrations of the mind so that the soul may become manifested, is the work. Training begins with the body. Breathing trains the body, gets it into a harmonious condition. The object of the breathing exercises is to attain meditation and concentration.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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THE CURE OF UNHELPFUL TENDENCIES

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

[Swami Vimalananda is a senior monk of the Ramakrishna Order. He has herein explained fully the impediments that stand in one's way of progress in spiritual life as also the way to overcome them, basing his explanations on a ten-verse poem in Sanskrit.—*Ed.*]

THE above caption is proposed as a rendering for the title *Durvāsanā-pratīkāra-daśakaṁ*, a metrical composition in Sanskrit attributed to Śrī Vidyāraṇya Muni. This tract has been recently printed at Rishikesh with a Hindi translation. The publisher, Thakkurdas Sirumal Sindhi, has not given the manuscript sources on which the edition is based. The subject of the composition comports with the thoughts presented in the author's other works like *Anubhūti-prakāśa* and *Vedānta-Pañcadaśī*. So in spite of the inferior literary merit at places, the work may be accepted as that of the sage till it is proved otherwise. I present below an explanation of this tract and reproduce the text for the benefit of religious aspirants.

The Advaita Philosophy, as expounded by Śrī Vidyāraṇya and others, emphasizes the following central tenets: As long as the Self is embodied, there is no means of escaping from pleasure and pain. Pleasure is the result of earlier meritorious deeds and pain that of their opposite. Every living being has a store of past merits and demerits to its credit. Actions done to fulfil the commands of the scriptures engender merit and transgression of such commands add to the store of demerit. Some conscious actions may be partly meritorious and partly the opposite of it. There are yet other kinds of actions that are involuntary and neutral. The entire course of life is thus a graph dotted and dashed by pleasure and pain, the harvest of past deeds.

The experience of pleasure and pain impresses on the embodied being an influence which creates *vāsanas* or tendencies to act in a certain way, and impelled by the preponderating influence merit or demerit results. Technically this impulsion is called *karma* which means potency of fruit-bearing actions performed in an earlier stage. The fruits of *karma* consist of rebirth, duration of life, and life-experiences—*jāti, āyus* and *bhoga*. Some beings live long and others die away early, depending on the fruit-bearing deeds done by them earlier. Life-experiences may give joy or sorrow by the force of the fruit-bearing actions done in the same life or earlier ones.

A living being wishes the repetition of pleasurable experiences and abhors painful ones naturally. The body and the mind are constantly active to secure pleasure and ward off pain. None can escape these dual experiences — pleasure and pain, attachment and aversion — as long as he is in the *samsāra*. The conceit 'I' and 'mine' is the cause of likes and dislikes, and these in turn involve the self in rebirth and further empirical experiences. The conceit itself is the result of beginningless nescience which can be removed only by realizing the Ātman in its true nature. The Ātman is not the embodied ego, but the self-luminous Reality which is pure Existence. Ātman is the very opposite of nescience though nescience has its support and content in the Ātman, just as a room although quite different is the support and content of the darkness in it. The room is neither the locus nor object of the darkness, when light is brought into it. Similarly when the true nature of the Ātman is realized, original ignorance, the conceit brought about by it, attachment and aversion, acts of merits and demerits, and experiences of pleasure and pain — all will vanish immediately. Those

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tendencies that are helpful for *ātmajñāna* are therefore to be cultivated constantly and their opposites weeded out carefully. This process of negating by the opposite is what is elaborated in this philosophic poem.

Ancient Sanskrit texts classify humanity into four types, viz., *pāmara*, *śiṣṭa*, *mumukṣu* and *mukta* — those who are not enlightened, the trained seekers of enjoyments, candidates for release from rebirth, and the released, respectively. Those belonging to the first type have no taste or capacity for spiritual realization. The second type may have occasional thoughts about the nature of spiritual release, but being absorbed in the pursuits of pleasure, they hardly seek the spiritual goal. The last type of candidates are extremely rare; they have achieved their goal. Therefore, the struggle for release is the concern of the third type, the *mumukṣu*. A *mumukṣu* cannot remain contented with the satisfactions of the body and the mind; like a person who is scorched by torrid heat plunges himself into a pool of water, and does not want to come out of it, so the *mumukṣu* does not want to abate from his endeavour even for a moment. He disciplines his life under strict rules.

Man is born with innumerable hidden tendencies; they are only inferred like the kind of smell indicated by its source. Therefore, these are aptly called *vāsanas*. These tendencies may be agreeable or disagreeable to the subject, but they are not the result of premeditation or reasoning. They abruptly rise as a person is situated. The joy that wells up in the mind at the sight of a missing friend is as spontaneous as the anger that sprouts up when a hidden foe is suddenly confronted. Each tendency coming to the conscious level produces a similar impression, which strengthens the old tendency further, or creates a new one allied to it. It is therefore the main endeavour of an aspirant seeking release to establish an unbroken stream of helpful tendencies from the very beginning, opposing the unhelpful ones deliberately. Only in this way he establishes his character. He treats his mind as his own child and pupil. This method of dividing oneself into a preceptor and disciple is reinforced by a constant longing to regulate oneself incessantly. Verses two to eight of this composition give a picture of the aspirant reproving his mind and advising it to establish positive virtues by replacing the negative ones by them. —

प्रातर्वैदिककर्मसत्कदनु सद्वेदान्तसञ्चिन्तया,
पश्चाद्भारतमोक्षधर्मकथया वासिष्ठरामायणात्।
सायं भागवतार्थतत्त्वकथया रात्रौ निदिध्यासनात्,
कालो गच्छतु नः शरीरभरणं प्रारब्धकण्ठार्पितम् ॥१॥

First comes a programme verse. The author prays that the periods of our day may proceed in this manner: 'During the hour falling immediately before sunrise and following it must be devoted to the purpose of worship enjoined by the scriptures. The next division of the day is for reflection of the final import of the Vedas. The study of the *mokṣa dharma parvan* in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇa* belongs to the succeeding period. Afternoon should be set apart for expounding and listening to the truths proclaimed by *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*. Contemplation of the Divine Reality must occupy the night'. The stanza concludes by saying that 'subsistence is no problem for a person totally dedicated to God; for the momentum of his past deeds or *prārabdha* insures it'. He alone is a true candidate for release from *samsāra* who longs to fulfil every condition required for it without loss of even a moment. His example is that of a person caught up in a wild fire who dashes out of it without caring for any thing else. Such an attitude is expressed in the *Bhagavad Gītā* by the expressions *niryogakṣema ātmavān* and *teṣāṁ yogakṣemaṁ vahāmi ahaṁ*. The seeker of the Ātman is not anxious for acquiring wealth or preserving it. This idea of absolute self-surrender to God is very impressively set out in the Bible (Matthew, VII): 'Therefore I bid you put away anxious thoughts about food and drink to keep you alive, and clothes to cover your body. Surely life is more than food, the body more than clothes. . . . How little faith you have! No, do not ask anxiously, "What are we to eat? What are we to drink? What

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shall we wear ?" All these are things for the heathen to run after, not for you, because your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. Set your mind on God's Kingdom and his justice before everything else, and all the rest will come to you as well. So be not anxious about tomorrow ; tomorrow will look after itself '. God looks after him ; his safety and protection are predestined. If a *mumukṣu* feels that God has not protected him, his regret only proves the poor quality of his dedication. With a slack and fizzy longing for release none can attain the goal. It goes without saying that those who have not got cent per cent faith in God and a fervent and assertive longing for *mukti* will come to grief if they grow lazy to work for bread or become inactive hanging on predestination.

अज्ञानं त्यज हे मनो मम सदा ब्रह्मात्मसद्भावनात्,
सङ्कल्पानखिलानपि त्यज जगन्मिथ्यात्वसंभावनात्।
कामंसाधनसाधनश्रम परिध्यानादजस्रं त्यज,
क्रोधन्तु क्षमया सदा जहि बलाल्लोभं तु सन्तोषत: ॥२॥

How to counteract the unhelpful tendencies of the mind by helpful ones is expatiated upon from the second stanza. The mind is addressed thus : 'Leave hold of nescience or *ajñāna* by meditating upon the Supreme Reality always. Abandon all vain imaginations by regarding the world that gives rise to them as unreal. Desires and cravings must be left out by continuously considering the toil and evil involved in acquiring the means for satisfying them. Overcome anger by patience and avarice by contentment '. Only a man of true discrimination reaches the spiritual goal. The above statements are not disconnected, but present an underlying causal link. The deep-rooted feeling that the world and man's life in it are fixed and permanent is at the root of all craving for pleasures. This belief is born out of ignorance the only antedote for which is philosophical insight. If a person wants to relinquish craving for any object he must see the defects in it. Man does not toil for that which is full of defects. Shunning of the objects alone would not serve the purpose ; anger towards an object will not pluck out of the mind one's attachment for it. Whenever anger upsets the mind, one should therefore practise patience, and reason out that things of the world cherished for self-enjoyments are beset with distraction, fraud, concealment, lie, and grinding toil. Continuous patience and reflection upon the shortcomings and inferiority of the pleasure-bearing objects and removal of ignorance by the contemplation upon the Divine — these are presented here as the method of inner discipline.

जिह्वोपस्थसुखभ्रमं त्यज मन: पर्यन्तदु:खेक्षणात्,
पारुष्यं मृदुभाषणात्त्यज वृथाऽऽलापश्रमं मौनत:।
दुस्सङ्गं त्यज साधुसङ्गमबलाद् गर्वं तु भङ्गेक्षणात्,
निन्दादु:खमनिन्द्यदेवमुनिभिर्निन्दा कथा संस्मृते: ॥३॥

The third stanza lays down some of the essential principles of spiritual practice. 'Oh Mind, abandon the delusion of finding pleasure in gluttony and sensualism by observing their after-effects. Substitute malediction by benediction. Put an end to the enfeebling spate of words by the observance of silence. Give up the inclination to mix with low fellows by invoking the power of noble company. Taking note of defeat suffered even by the mighty and influential, give no room in your mind for arrogance. If you smart under the low estimation of others, find the remedy for it by recalling to your mind that even sages and divine personalities were not left out by calumniators.'

Any modification made in nature by the exercise of human intelligence and skill is culture ; but the cultivation of the human mind in nobility and virtue is the highest form of it. Interior culture is impossible without abjuring slavery to inferior pleasures. Trained calmness of the mind expressed in verbal silence opens the gates to many virtues. One recognizes the evils of affective talkativeness only when it is too late to repair the havoc done by it. Tell me the books you read (or name your friends), I shall then tell you what sort of man you are. This trite adage stresses the value of right company. Finally, without humility no good can be permanent.

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निद्रां सात्त्विकवस्तुसेवनतया खप्नं सदा जागरात्,
रोगाञ्जीर्णमिताशनाज्जहि सदा दैन्यं महाधैर्यत: ।
अर्थानर्थपरिग्रहं त्यज वृथासंसर्गसंत्यागत:,
स्त्रीवाञ्छां त्यज दोष दर्शनबलाद्दु:खं सुखात्मेक्ष-
णात् ॥ ४ ॥

The mind is further admonished thus: 'Having recourse to *sāttvik* foodstuff and modes of living subdue your sleep. By keeping perpetual vigilance, keep out of day-dreams. Ward off diseases by consuming appropriate quantity of easily assimilable food. Summoning indomitable courage, prevent wretched slavery either to your senses or to others. By eschewing profitless associations and contacts avoid the necessity of worldly provisions which bring troubles in their wake. Overcome sex attraction by the force of seeing injury done by it. Shed all sorrow by the vision of the Supreme Self'. Sleep in excess of what is needed to refresh the body is a disease which deducts grievously from man's industry for material and spiritual progress. It is the outcome of *tamas* or stupor induced by wrong life. The quality of *sattva* alone can cure *tamas*. According to the scriptures time, place, water, men, their birth, actions, thoughts, vehicles of thoughts, and initiation into modes of life — all fall under the categories of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. By choosing the *sāttvic* modes one will be vigilant and awake. Right action is the only remedy for earlier wrong actions; and Self-realization alone is the cure for *ajñāna*.

दारासक्तिमनादरात्सुतधनासक्तिं त्वनित्यत्वत:,
स्नेहं मोहविसर्जनात्करुणया नैष्ठुर्यमन्तस्त्यज ।
औदासीन्यसमाश्रयात्त्यज सुहृन्मित्रारिदुर्वासनाम्
सर्वानर्थकरान्दशेन्द्रियरिपूनेकान्तवासाज्जहि ॥ ५ ॥

This stanza inculcates that by not laying stress upon attachment to the spouse, offsprings and wealth but by pondering over their impermanence one should overcome possessive love for them. Fondness for these must be subdued by avoiding delusion in this respect. Mental cruelty must be made impossible by the practice of compassion. One should also give up unhelpful inclinations towards benefactors, friends and enemies by cultivating indifference. The ten hostile senses are at the root of all troubles, and they must be subdued by a relish for solitude.

It must be borne in mind that this advise is given to the *mumukṣu* who finds that even a chain of gold is as much a limitation as that of iron; and so fondness and attachment for any person or object is an impediment on his path. His relation with all living beings is based on an impartial and intense goodwill or *karuṇa* and not on any specific fondness. *Ekāntavāsa* or solitude is not the result of agoraphobia. There is a belief that gregarious humans become sick in solitude. Shallow minds, innocent of the deep joys of an inward life, can find no joy except when they are in a crowd. Prefabricated noise perpetually dinned into their ears gives them the highest pleasure. The less a man or woman loves reflection and thought, the more he or she is prone to the flowing tongue. The victims of verbal diarrhoea do not realize that it is an illness which impairs their health in the long run. Silence born of a calm and thoughtful mind is the balm of life and gateway to spiritual wisdom.

आलस्यं त्वरया श्रमं शमधिया तन्द्रिं समुत्थानतो-
भेदं भ्रान्तिमभेददर्शनबलान्मिथ्यात्वत: सत्यताम् ।
मर्मोक्तिं निजमर्मकर्मकथया क्रोधं खसाम्येक्षणात्
आक्रोशं कुशलोक्तितस्त्यज मनश्छिध्यप्रमादाद्भयम्
॥ ६ ॥

'Oh, Mind, apply the following antedotes: When you dawdle and feel lazy, speed up wilfully. If you are jaded by physical or mental fatigue, withdraw the mind into its own calm inward state. If you feel sluggish, arouse yourself vigorously. By perceiving unity, replace the erroneous perception of difference. Remove the misjudgement that the world is a reality by seeing that the world is but a shadow and God alone is real. Shut out the propensity to ferret out other people's secrets or guarded deeds by willingly disclosing your own. Shut the door on anger by seeing the same Self dwelling in oneself and

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the objects of one's anger. Rule out vilification by paying compliments in turn. Shut out fear by caution and watchfulness.' In the second stanza it was told that patience is the antedote to anger. Here the ultimate remedy of seeing one's Self in all beings is advised as further aid to it. Even slight hurts in the deadly spots of the body are resented by any one. These regions are called *marman* in Sanskrit. And so they are guarded well by nature and design. Just as the body is open to assault, so too the mind is vulnerable to hurtful words. The moral brought out here is that a man should not throw stones at glass houses as he himself is a resident of one.

भूतार्थस्मरणं वृथाश्रमधिया प्राप्तं तु हानेक्षणात्,
भव्यार्थेष्वसनं सदा त्यज मनः प्रारब्धचोद्येक्षणात्।
शिष्टाशिष्टजनक्रियां त्यज वृथाकष्टानुसन्धानतः,
स्नेहाद्वेषमतिं सदा त्यज जनं मत्वान्धतां संस्कृतेः ॥ ७ ॥

'Oh Mind, give up the habit of ruminating over past events, considering that it is a waste of efforts. Do not hold on to present subjects by seeing that they are sure to part company. Do not be anxious at any time for what fate holds in store for you, by seeing that your *prārabdha* is strictly under the power of futurity. Do not be implicated in the activities of well-instructed people who work for the present and future benefits, or the ignorant who do not work at all. Achieve this by reasoning to yourself that either of them are pursuing what is ultimately of little profit to themselves. If you feel hostility towards any one, replace it by loving good-will. Give up attachment to all that is originated, including your own body, by considering that these are subject to ultimate dissolution.'

अध्यात्मादि भवं सदा त्यज मनस्तापं स्वभावेक्षणात्,
वैषम्यं समभावतः परकथाविक्षेपमक्षोभतः।
धिक्कारादिभवं तु दुःखमनिशं तद्योग्यता भावनात्,
तज्ज्ञातज्ञशिशून्क्षमस्व कृपया कर्मक्षयत्ताडनम् ॥ ८ ॥

Adhyātma, adhidaiva, adhibhūta — these are the three heads under which pain is classified. The first term refers to distress resulting from one's own mind and body, e.g. psychic and physical disorders. The second term denotes distress caused by natural powers and invisible spirits — fire, water, planets, demonic spirits and so forth. The third group refers to noxious creatures like snake and tiger, and also human foes. Man is always worried even today about many of these. One should forestall these by applying the necessary cure or by getting himself reconciled to them as but natural. Contraries such as enmity and friendliness, meritoriousness and wickedness, passion and greed, should not be allowed to disturb one's peace; to achieve that practise equanimity. A man is usually agitated and made miserable by provocative speech uttered in his presence. But a *mumukṣu* must seek remedy for it by not getting ruffled even under trying circumstances. He must overcome the pain caused by reprobation and defeat by considering them as his due, for they, when patiently borne, take away his unseen demerits. With compassion an aspirant should pardon the foolish who subject him to abuse whether they recognize him or not. The fool is like an infant; for both share the incapacity to think and reason. The wise man must be compassionate to the wrong doer, because he is mentally deficient. No man with a mature mind will act wickedly. So, if the wicked hurt the sage by landing blows upon him, the sage considers it as his own *prārabdha*. Hindu scriptures consider, it has been already pointed out, that merits bear future pleasure and demerits a crop of pain. So by welcoming pain inflicted by others without reaction one reduces one's demerits and by refraining from the pleasures afforded by others, one increases one's merits.

आयुर्गच्छति पेटिकामिव जलं सन्त्यज्य देहं जवात्,
गच्छन्तीन्द्रियशक्तयोऽपि कुलटा यद्वन्नरं निर्धनम्।
प्रज्ञा गच्छति दावदाहसमये नीडं मृगीवत्क्व वा
ज्ञात्वा सत्वरमाश्रयात्मपदवीं देहं वृथा मा कृथाः ॥ ९ ॥

'Water kept in a box runs out without delay; like that, life ebbs away from the body swiftly. Just as a woman of easy virtue casts off a loose fellow rendered penniless, so also

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the powers of the senses relinquish a man who is done up. When the forest is on fire the deer speeds away somewhere else quitting its lair; in the same manner consciousness leaves man when the body is about to be destroyed. Understand this and dedicate yourself presently to the path of Ātman. Do not make your human body a futility.' This penultimate stanza admonishes the aspirant to make his life a fitting preparation for the final event.

धैर्येरावतशान्तिधेनुदमनामन्दारवृक्षं सदा
मैत्र्याद्यप्सरसं विवेकतुरगं सन्तोषचिन्तामणिम् ।
आत्मज्ञानमहाऽमृतं समरसं वैराग्यचन्द्रोदयं
वेदान्तार्णवमाश्रयन्ननुदिनं सेवस्व मुक्तिश्रियम् ॥ १० ॥

The last stanza advises: Prosperity must be won through unintermittent industry. The glory of release from *samsāra* is no mean prize; it is the goddess of Fortune herself; it can be got only by supreme effort, similar to that of churning the milk ocean for ambrosia by the gods. In that superhuman endeavour *amṛta* was harbingered by the elephant Airāvata, the horse Uccaiśravas, the bountiful cow Kāmadhenu, the wish-yielding tree Mandāra, the paradisal nymphs, the wish-gem Cintāmaṇi, and the moon that gives constant joy. The glory of release, too, is attained after a series of similar precursors. When a seeker of *mukti* churns the ocean of Vedanta daily for *amṛtatva*, courage and wisdom come out as the Airāvata came out of the Milk Sea; tranquillity then follows as the Kāmadhenu. All-round control of the senses that comes next is like the Mandāra. Friendliness for those in a happy state, compassion for the distressed, delight at the meritorious, and indifference towards the wicked are analogous to the water nymphs that emerged from the Milk Sea; discrimination is like the horse; and dispassion for the world the moon. Self-knowledge is the excellent ambrosia, of one taste in its limitless nature; and *mukti* itself the goddess of Fortune. The sustained figure of speech in this stanza vividly brings out that release from *samsāra* is the most covetable goal, and that it can be got only when one makes the greatest effort and the attendant virtues are complete.

Every soul is destined to be perfect, and every being, in the end, will attain the state of perfection. Whatever we are now is the result of our acts and thoughts in the past; and whatever we shall be in the future, will be the result of what we think and do now. But this, the shaping of our own destinies, does not preclude our receiving help from outside; nay, in the vast majority of cases such help is absolutely necessary. When it comes, the higher powers and possibilities of the soul are quickened, spiritual life is awakened, growth is animated, and man becomes holy and perfect in the end.

This quickening impulse cannot be derived from books. The soul can only receive impulses from another soul, and from nothing else. We may study books all our lives, we may become very intellectual, but in the end we find that we have not developed at all spiritually.

In studying books we are sometimes deluded into thinking that thereby we are being spiritually helped; but, if we analyze the effect of the study of books on ourselves, we shall find that at the utmost, it is only our intellect that derives profit from such studies, and not our inner spirit.

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF SHELLEY

P. S. SASTRI

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Of all the English poets Shelley was a Platonist by conviction, study and experience. The Absolute Idealism of Plato was an integral part of Shelley's outlook on life; and the consequent philosophy appearing in the poetry of Shelley is much closer to the standpoint of Advaita Vedanta.

As a philosophic poet Shelley faced the problem of evil squarely. Evil, he contended, is not an accident of life, but it is a principle inherent in the present order of existence. This evil can be destroyed only by love. In his *Prometheus Unbound*, he asserts that love alone is free from the sway of 'fate, time, occasion, chance, and change'. But there is the thinnest partition between the ideal world of truth and reality and the actual world of cruelty and hypocrisy. This partition is referred to by the word *veil*; and this concept is not much different from the concealing power (*āvaraṇa śakti*) of Māyā.

The veil is the natural accoutrement of the ideal object of love. The beloved appears as a veiled maid in *Alastor* and elsewhere. In the company of his object he needs 'a veil for our seclusion, close as night's', in his *Epipsychidion* (p. 423).[1] The veil clearly hides goodness, truth, or beauty. In *The Revolt of Islam* (p. 124) he writes :

> With strong speech I tore the veil that hid
> Nature, and Truth, and Liberty, and Love.

Truth like the other aspects of Reality appears as veiled. And he says,

> Truth be veiled, but still it burneth (p. 453).

It is a burning truth and since it does not depend on others, it is self-luminous and self-revealing.

Then the world in which we live temporally is only an appearance. It is a veil concealing Reality. The illusory world of impermanence hides or half-hides the ideal world of Reality :

> Lift not the painted veil which those who live
> Call Life : though unreal shapes be pictured there,
> And it but mimic all we would believe
> With colours idly spread. (p. 569)

This world of impermanence is made up of names and forms. The veil which presents the world-appearance and hides Reality is the 'intermediate space' between the immortal and the mortal. The veil appears to us as life; but in truth,

> Death is the veil which those who live call life. (p. 248)

Death and life are synonymous, and so is the veil. At the moment of realization, the veil is rent asunder. When 'the painted veil is torn aside', the spirit of the Hour declares,

> The loathsome mask has fallen, the man remains
> Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man
> Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,
> Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king
> Over himself; just, gentle, wise. (p. 253)

Man then becomes a pure, free spirit. There will be a plurality of Spirits or Selves all equal to one another. They are identical with one

[1] The numbers refer to the pages of *The Complete Works of P. B. Shelley*, 1960, Oxford.

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another. This freedom (*mokṣa*) is of their essence.

The visible world is an appearance. It is only a half-real approximation to the full reality of the spiritual world. The veil that makes Reality appear as the world, is presented in a variety of ways by Shelley. It is time which obscures Eternity. There is 'the sinuous veil of woven wind' (p. 19) hiding the Beautiful through the mask of time. This time for the individual appears to come to an end at the moment of death. Then death becomes the revealer. This death is related to sleep and dream. Shelley holds that dream offers a fuller vision of Reality than life. So day and light appear as the forms of the obscuring veil. He writes that 'the day's veil fell from the world of sleep' (p. 591).

Daylight presents us with the world of objects and these are not ultimately real. Shelley thus came to develop a distrust of light :

> As if some bright Spirit for her sweet sake
> Had deserted Heaven while the stars
> were awake,
> As if yet around her he lingering were,
> Though the veil of day light concealed
> him from her. (p. 592)

Th Spiritual light of our being is obscured by the prosaic daylight of the world of appearances. Even the poet, he says is 'hidden in the light of thought'. (p. 602)

Shelley believed that there is an Absolute Spirit in the Universe. The universe is never a mere 'outward world'. Even the West wind comes to him as 'the breath of Autumn's being', the word *breath* meaning *spirit.* This spirit works within the world contending with obstruction and struggling to penetrate and transmute it.

> . . . the one Spirit's plastic's stress
> Sweeps through the dull dense world,
> compelling there,
> All new successions to the forms they
> wear ;
> Torturing th' unwilling dross that
> checks its flight
> To its own likeness, as each mass may
> bear. (p. 441)

The one Spirit enters the Universe as the *antaryāmin*, and then it brings forth names and forms (*nāma rūpé*). The dross is to be transmuted so that there remains only the Spirit. The plastic stress of this power masters the last resistance and becomes all in all. That is the far-off day when one realizes — '*sarvaṁ khalvidam brahma*'.

This Supreme Spirit, says Shelley, is both immanent and transcendent. It is the *antaryāmin* and the *adhyakṣa*, because it

> Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it
> above. (p. 441)

Since Spirit is one without a second, and since it alone is real, there is the spiritual unity of all life. Thus Shelley would sing, almost echoing the Upaniṣad :

> The One remains, the many change
> and pass ;
> Heaven's light for ever shines, Earth's
> shadows fly ;
> Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
> Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
> Until Death tramples it to fragments.
> (p. 443)

The many are the transient appearances claiming life. But life implies and involves death. Even life reveals the radiance of Eternity, not as it is in itself, but as conditioned. The radiance is stained. Life is one grand '*sopādhika-bhrama*' and the *upādhi* is life in its multiplicity. The veil then not only hides Reality, but makes Reality appear as many.

The Absolute Spirit is the forming and formative Spirit. It is the supreme Love. It is

> . . . that sustaining Love
> Which through web of being blindly wove
> By man and beast and earth and air
> and sea,
> Burns bright or dim, as each are
> mirrors of
> The fire for which all thirst. (p. 443)

This Spirit which is the same as Love is self-luminous and it is present in every individual because each soul is a reflection of that Spirit. It is curious to note that the *Pratibimba-vāda*

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too appears in Shelley. The individual soul is a reflection of the Absolute ; and yet it is also

> . . . a many-sided mirror,
> Which could distort to many a shape
> of error,
> This true fair world of things. (p. 263)

The Absolute Spirit is the supreme wisdom, according to Shelley, who, however, places greater emphasis on the beauty of the Absolute. It is the 'Beauty in which all things work and move' (p. 443). It is the 'Beauty which penetrates and clasps and fills the world' (p. 414).

A powerful spirit of evil interferes with the work of the Supreme power. This evil as we have seen earlier appears as the veil and we may identify it as Māyā. Shelley observes that time is a force thwarting good and favouring evil. But Heaven is the true essence of this world, while we 'keep with phantoms' and 'decay like corpses in a charnel' (p. 440).

From this standpoint matter would not appear to be real. It is a dream. Thought alone is the most enduring entity. Thus he says,

> But Greece and her foundations are
> Built below the tide of war,
> Based on the crystalline sea
> Of thought and its eternity. (p. 468)

About the entire Universe of appearances, he says :

> Thought is its cradle and its grave,
> nor less
> The Future and the Past are idle shadows
> Of thought's eternal flight — they have
> no being. (pp. 470-1)

The universe has no independent being of its own. It is grounded in Thought, and it is intelligible only in the light of Thought. The world accordingly is the self-evolution of an absolute intelligence. The varied objects are, metaphysically speaking, 'portions of one power' (p. 613).

The Absolute is the Supreme Ideal which is to be sought in thought, emotion, nature, and humanity. It is the Spirit of Beauty and man needs the love of the living Spirit of Beauty. This love leads to the highest wisdom. Love extends through the universe. Even the flowers are said to experience this love (p. 589). Shelley would say that love is an intermediary spirit between gods and men. The person and his object of love are

> . . . like two meteors of expanding flame,
> Those spheres instinct with it become
> the same,
> Touch, mingle, are transfigured. (p. 424)

Shelley is both a poet and a philosopher. As a philosopher he observes, and as a poet he participates. His way was not to explain truth but to give an effective expression to it.

The idea that nature in all her orderly arrangements shows design on the part of the Creator of the universe is good as a kindergarten teaching to show the beauty, power and glory of God, in order to lead children in religion up to a philosophical conception of God, but apart from that, it is not good, and perfectly illogical. As a philosophical idea it is entirely without foundation, if God is taken to be omnipotent.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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THE DOCTRINE OF MAYA AND THE NOTION OF ABSURD IN CAMUS

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JEAN PAUL SARTRE, the *enfant terrible* of French existentialism, speaking of the notion of the absurd in Camus makes the following estimate :

> ' In Camus' work the word (absurd) takes on two very different meanings. The absurd is both a state of fact (which reminds us meaningfully of Vivekananda's definition of Māyā as a statement of fact ; the parenthesis is ours) and the lucid awareness which certain people acquire of this state of fact. The absurd man is the man who does not hesitate to draw the inevitable conclusion from a fundamental absurdity.'
>
> ' What is meant by the absurd as a state of fact, as a primary situation ? It means nothing less than man's relation to the world. Primary absurdity manifests a cleavage, the cleavage between man's aspiration to unity and the insurmountable dualism of mind and nature, between man's drive toward the eternal and the *finite* character of his existence, between the " concern " which constitutes his very essence and the vanity of his efforts. Chance, death, the irreducible pluralism of life and of truth, the unintelligibility of the real — all these are extremes of the absurd.'
>
> ' These are not really very new themes and Camus does not present them as such. They had been sounded as early as the seventeenth century by a certain kind of dry, plain, contemplative rationalism, which is typically French and they served as the commonplaces of classical pessimism. Was it not Pascal who emphasised " the natural misfortune of our mortal and feeble condition, so wretched that when we consider it closely, nothing can console us " ? Was it not he who put reason in its place ? Would he not have wholeheartedly approved the following remark of Camus : " The world is neither (completely) rational, nor quite irrational either " ? Does he not show that " custom " and " diversion " conceal man's " nothingness, his forlornness, his inadequacy, his impotence and his emptiness " from himself ? By virtue of the cool style and the subject of his essays, Camus takes his place in the great tradition of those French moralists . . . ' [1]

From this above summing-up it is clear that it is not the absurd of common parlance that is of interest to Camus, but the absurdity underlying the human condition, the rebellious recognition of the primary absurdity, of the incompetence of the human condition and of the limitations of the human thought neither to accept life nor to reject it.

Though this idea of the absurd is spread over in Camus' writings, it receives focussed attention in his book '*Myth of the Sisyphus*'.

The sequel of the absurd is to awaken in us lucidity and revolt, not revolt against ' the other ', but revolt against the human condition. In another book entitled the '*Rebel*' Camus concludes in its extra-ordinary brilliance the chapter named ' Beyond Nihilism ' : 'Crushed between human evil and destiny, between terror and the arbitrary, all that remains to man is his power to rebel in order to save from murder he who can still be a murderer '.

[1] *Literary and Philosophical Essays*, by J. P. Sartre, Rider and Company, pp. 24, 25.

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Then we understand that rebellion cannot exist without a strange form of love. Those who find no rest in God or in history are condemned to live for those who, like themselves, cannot live ; in fact, for the humiliated. The most pure form of movement of the rebellion is thus crowned with the heart-rending cry.

Karamazov : 'If all not saved, what good is the salvation of one only ?' (Dostoievsky's *Brothers Karamazov*)

'Rebellion proves, in this way, that it is the very movement of life and that it cannot be denied without renouncing life. Its purest outburst, on each occasion, gives birth to existence. Thus, it is love and fecundity, or it is nothing at all.'

The cry of Karamazov is so reminiscent of Appayya Dikshītar's cry for Sarvamukti or collective salvation which he develops in his *Siddhāntaleśa Sangraha* as a sequel to Śankara's Māyāvāda. If the crisis in human reason and conscience which Māyā brings about on the individual plane does not provoke in the person who lives it an *elan* to push for collective liberation, then this crisis is wasted. In the life of Jīvanmuktas like Buddha, Śankara and Ramakrishna the crisis of the human condition felt and lived by them was the start for a search for Sarvamukti.

Camus' absurd offers parallel with the individualised Māyā or *avidyā*. The Āvaraṇa (the suppression of the real) and the Vikshepa (the Surimposition of the unreal) powers of Māyā work on the individual plane and the results are an eclipse of one's mental and spiritual faculties and the wrong identification with the body and matter. Camus' enunciation of the absurd as the sense of one's limitation and incompetence and the desire, apparently ineffective to transcend this limitation emphasizes more on the *āvaraṇa* Śakti of Māyā than on the Vikshepa. But there is another aspect of the Māyā doctrine which compares strikingly with the absurd.

All Vedantic schools agree in holding that the Ātman is of the nature of pure consciousness and that Ātman is consequently the substrate and the substance of Jñāna or awareness. Ātman is Jñānaswarūpa. This substantive *jñāna* has a distinguishable adjunct which inheres in it by way of inseparable concomitance, like the glow in a flame. This may be considered a form of adjectival *jñāna* or *dharmabhūtajñāna*, — a term specially favourite of the Viśiṣṭādvaitins — which contracts under the influence of *avidyā* or expands when the taint of *avidyā-kāma-karma* is removed. It is this expanded *dharmabhūtajñāna* or transformation of the *antaḥkaraṇa vṛtti* that can destroy ignorance. Thus this *dharmabhūtajñāna*, in its expansive character, and *ajñāna*, which makes for contraction, though opposed to each other are juxtaposed. The *Akhaṇḍākāra vṛtti* or the absolutely expansive nature and *ajñāna* co-exist. The *swarūpajñāna*, which is pure consciousness in its substantive being, is unaffected by *ajñāna* which may reside in it and conceal it until the *Akhaṇḍākāra vṛtti* is attained. It is here that Camus' absurd comes in for a brilliant comparison. In Camus too the sense of limitation is juxtaposed with the push for unlimitedness or *Akhaṇḍākāra vṛtti*. If this juxtaposition were not there, there would not have been the absurd feeling that doesn't allow man to remain idle and sleep.

II

A comparative study is specially attractive because Camus begins his essay by saying that the notion of absurd is for him a starting point and not a conclusion as with many other existentialists. The sense of limitation and incompetence which a man feels, wedged in as he is between two irreconcilable categories of value, of thought : real and unreal, relative and absolute, good and bad and his veiled desire to transcend them — this is the essence of the Māyā doctrine. This is also the notion of absurd in Camus : the primary absurdity that manifests in life as a cleavage between man's aspirations to unity and the insurmountable dualism of mind and nature, and the struggle between his very essence and the vanity of his efforts. But the feeling of incompetence can't be a conclusion. It can only be a springboard.

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This feeling of cleavage between two opposing values irreconcilable by thought leads us not to an ordinary incompetence or inadequacy. It is born of a sense of inexplicability. When I am conscious of a contradiction, my consciousness has already expanded. It is a strange relation between contradiction and consciousness which makes a reciprocal increase. The contradiction increases my consciousness and consciousness increases my sense of contradiction. The more the contradiction in a personality, the greater the quality of that personality. It is this race between consciousness and contradiction that produces the inexplicability-feeling in us. I feel I cannot explain what it is, but yet it is there. It is the inexplicability that makes a stranger of us in this world. We feel we are oppressed by a strange feeling. The first question Camus poses in the beginning is : 'Is life worth living with the irreconcilable opposition we feel, with the feeling of strangeness? Is it not better to solve it by suicide?' And Camus answers his own question by saying that it is worth living if one realizes life as absurd. What is this absurdity? 'Absurd is lucid reason noting its limits.'

One thing is remarkable in Camus' absurd. He plays with absurd as the magician plays with his cards or dolls, all to show that in the centre of the absurd, there is no absurdity ; as in the centre of the sun there is no heat ; in the centre of suffering there is no suffering ; in the centre of Māyā there is no illusion. It is Brahman, Reality. He makes a remarkable utterance in saying : 'The absurd which is the metaphysical state of the conscious man, does not lead to God' — which is not to say that it excludes God. 'The absurd is sin without God.' He conceives sin and God as opposed to each other. But as opposites they cancel each other or are absorbed in consciousness and consciousness which before made the opposition now remains non-dual and without opposition.

Camus has not used the word inexplicable to indicate absurdity. I have borrowed it from the Māyā doctrine to interpret his thought and bring it nearer to the Māyā doctrine. The central teaching of Māyā is contained in the inexplicability of empirical experience. There is much psychological and metaphysical wealth in the notion of *anirvacanīya*. Śankara says in his commentary on the Brahma Sutras that empirical life is produced by the combination of the real and the unreal. It is the eternal continuity of the intersection between the real and the unreal. When I feel myself a part of Reality, I feel myself a law unto myself ; but when I feel I am part of the unreal, I feel crispated. The limitations of mortality and the aspirations after immortality or infallibility crowd into my life to produce this inexplicability — *This is Māyā*. To give a parallel from Camus : 'The world is neither completely rational nor quite irrational either'.

I should think that the Māyā doctrine goes deeper into the feeling of absurdity. According to it, the mind in juxtaposition with two categories of reality produces a third category which for the moment is of the order of inexplicability as my powers of understanding are dull. It is neither real, nor unreal, nor both, but undefinable. It is not a substanceless illusion. For when we analyse it we find that it is produced by Reality passing through the prism of mind, even as the white ray becoming the seven colours. I *know* it is an illusion and yet I am deceived. Well, this passage between truth and illusion which the mind experiences in life is due to the basic Reality of consciousness which splits itself in various colours. Illusion was due to ignorance of Reality and ignorance of a thing does not affect its existence. When realization comes it is the same illusion that converts itself into Reality. Reality was always there, the reality of the white light ; only we were identifying *it* with the *ramifications of Reality* — Inexplicability of experience is due to the inexplicability of Reality behind experience.

This presentation of empirical experience as an illusion that *transforms itself into* Reality has great psychological and metaphysical significance. The transformation is in myself ; before, due to my insufficient comprehension, I was not conscious of the Reality and now I am. What was before me as an irreconcilable

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contradiction in empirical life is an exteriority projected by my interiority. Confrontation of that exteriority creates a depth in my consciousness, an expansion in my awareness and in that expansion I absorb the exteriority as my own. Māyā says : 'The exteriority is my own, it is only a confrontation as I confront my own image in the mirror to say it is mine'.

We all know that when a problem appears as alien to us, it is not by escaping that problem that we solve it but by confronting it, by expanding our comprehension of it and of ourselves. For then, in that expanded consciousness the problem is absorbed. In reality, the problem was not a foreigner, but an exteriority of our interiority — projected by ourselves.

That is why we feel our problems solved in the presence of a spiritual personality. A spiritual man expands our comprehension and awareness. He has less of Māyā in him and in this expanded consciousness created by him our problems evaporate.

I should think there is a kind of evolution in the notion of the absurd in Camus. There is an ordinary absurd, the feeling of incompetence created by contradiction. And then when this sense of contradictions heightens, the 'I' who sees this contradiction also heightens to a pitch. The result is the 'I' has a desire to know itself. All efforts of the 'I' to know itself end up in an absurdity-feeling. For the 'I' *can know itself*. It can intuit itself and the result is extreme lucidity. 'The absurd is lucid reason noting its own limits.' Again, 'Man integrates the absurd and in that communion causes to disappear its essential character which is opposition, laceration and divorce. It is a leap'.[2]

This man who integrates is not the ordinary man, but the Jñāni, the Jīvanmukta. He changes the essential character of the world and of Māyā. For him the world itself is Brahman, Māyā is Brahman. Camus uses often the word 'leap'. It is not a physical leap ; it is a leap in consciousness, it is a change of consciousness. This change and the struggle before it is beautifully pictured :

> 'I don't know whether this world has a meaning that transcends it. But I know that I do not know that meaning and that it is impossible for me just now to know it. What can a meaning outside my condition mean to me? I can understand only in human terms. What I touch, what resists me that is what I understand. And these two certainties — my appetite for the absolute and for unity and the impossibility of reducing this world to a rational and reasonable principle — I also know that I cannot reconcile them. What other truth can I admit without lying, without bringing in a hope I lack, which means nothing within the limits of my condition?
>
> 'If I were a tree among trees, a cat among animals, this life would have a meaning or rather this problem would not arise, for I should belong to this world. I should *be* this world to which I am now opposed by my whole consciousness and my whole insistence upon familiarity. This ridiculous reason is what sets me in opposition to all creation. I cannot cross it out with a stroke of the pen'.

The same world returns in a different way. As Sri Ramakrishna says, for the Jñāni the world is a mansion of mirth. The Jñāni *creates* a new world out of himself, out of his consciousness and love. 'The ideal of the absurd man,' says Camus, 'is the present and the succession of presents before a constantly conscious soul.' 'The absurd, to be sure, resides neither in man nor in the world, if you consider each separately. But since man's dominant characteristic is "being in the world", the absurd is, in the end, an inseparable part of the human condition.'[3]

III

The argument of the absurd is divided into three : Absurd Reasoning, Absurd Man and Absurd Creation.

Absurd Reasoning is the most forceful and Camus lays down his arguments. In absurd reasoning he says :

> 'It is a matter of living in that state of the absurd. I know on what it is founded, this mind and this world straining against each other without being able to embrace

[2] *Myth of Sisyphus*, by A. Camus, p. 34.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 55.

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each other. I ask for the rule of life of that state and what I am offered neglects its basis, negates one of the terms of the painful opposition, demands of me a resignation. I ask what is involved in the condition I recognize as mine. I know it implies obscurity and ignorance ; and I am assured that this ignorance explains everything and this darkness is my light. But there is no reply here to my intent and this stirring lyricism cannot hide the paradox from me.'

But Camus finds a religious essence in this search :

'In fact, our aim is to shed light upon the step taken by the mind, when, starting from a philosophy of the world's lack of meaning, it ends up by finding a meaning and depth in it. The most touching of those steps is religious in essence ; it becomes obvious in the theme of the irrational.' [4]

When one closes the book, one feels, it is absurd to reason, absurd to be a man, but it is not absurd to create, for to create is to be conscious. Absurd reasoning is proof in itself of the futility of abstract reasoning. But when one reasons with the categories of truth and life, one can exhaust all one's thought. And when thought is exhausted Reality is there. Reality is not what is created, but what is realized when all hopes and efforts of finding it are exhausted. We are reminded of the Indian conception, and also of the Greek conception. The lines of Pindar, the Greek poet, are inscribed in the beginning of the book : 'Oh soul, do not aspire to immortal life ; all that thou canst do is to exhaust the limits of the possible '.

The chapter on the Absurd Man sums up the argument to the effect that the absurd man is one who has no other strength except lucidity, which is Jñāna. For the Jñāni, there is no other strength necessary than consciousness. Camus says that the absurd man chooses to be with time and history than with the eternal. For time is the eternal and this realization that time is the eternal, that relative is the absolute, can be had only by Jñāna.

In the last chapter, entitled Absurd Creation, Camus identifies himself with the problem of Kirilov, the hero of Dostoievsky's novel 'The Possessed '. For Kirilov also, the problem is between the limitations of mortality and the aspiration for immortality. Kirilov's inevitable conclusion is suicide. The same problem is posed in Dostoievsky's 'Diary of a Writer '. It is stated thus :

'Since in reply to my questions about happiness I am told, through the intermediary of my consciousness, that I cannot be happy except in harmony with the great-all, which I cannot conceive and shall never be in a position to conceive, it is evident . . .'

'Since, finally in this connection, I assume both the role of the plaintiff and that of the defendant, of the accused and of the judge, and since I consider this comedy perpetrated by nature altogether stupid, and since I even deem it humiliating for me to deign to play it . . .'

'In my indisputable capacity of plaintiff and defendant, of judge and accused, I condemn that nature which, with such impudent nerve, brought me into being in order to suffer — I condemn it to be annihilated with me.' [5]

Yet what is the conclusion of Dostoievsky ?

In the following instalments of the *Diary*, Dostoievsky amplifies his position and concludes thus :

'If faith in immortality is so necessary to the human being (that without it he comes to the point of killing himself) it must therefore be the normal state of humanity. Since this is the case, the immortality of the human soul exists without any doubt. Since Kirilov is not sure not to come back again, it is a waste of energy to put an end to this life.'

Camus agrees with Dostoievsky that, in so far as man can bridge the mortal and the immortal by consciousness, the conclusion is to live and know life. It is not to stop it by suicide. Existence is illusory *and* it is eternal. How to know these two dimensions of existence except by an unfailing awareness ? The necessity of this unfailing awareness is the general plan of this essay of Camus.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 39.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 85, 86.

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Jñāna is this unfailing awareness. It is lucidity. With Jñāna man measures and comprehends what is illusory and what is eternal. With Jñāna the Jīvanmukta creates a new world. And when Camus speaks of absurd creation, he is meaning the creation of a spiritual consciousness which is at the base of all creation, artistic, intellectual. A Jñāni is not a person, but he is consciousness itself and that is why we say that the Jñāni has one leg in the manifested and one leg in the non-manifested and he is beyond both. Camus chooses time and history to eternity, for time is eternity. Making a division between these two, is Māyā, is the mistake. Between Māyā and Brahman, between man and God, there is no dividing line. He who makes a division is in duality, and duality is sin. It is absurd to search for the transcendental, for he who searches is himself the sought. And the feeling of separation from the sought makes of the transcendental a thing of academic value, an abstraction. It is not an abstraction : it is the life of our lives, the soul of our souls. It cannot be avoided by any effort.

Camus begins the problem by saying that life is pointless and ends by the words : the point is to live. Between these two points, is compressed a large world of human endeavour, thought and its absurdity. It is absurd to reason, absurd to be a man ; for man covers his anguish by the daily routine of running after the autobus, visiting restaurants and attending to the office. In the centre of this apparent absurdity that is life, is a sublime absurdity which can be awakened by consciousness, by Jñāna. The absurd creation is the creation of Jñāna ; it is absurd because it cannot be created. It is there already. All that we can do is to exhaust our resistance to realizing it. One may ask : 'Why then call it absurd, if it is sublime ?' Yes, with reason ; because when one descends to the world of language and expression, Reality which is One and the Many at the same time can be expressed only by contradictions. But this contradiction is only in the world of expression. Reality is best indicated by silence. When we descend from this height of silence, we can only indicate it by contradictions.

ALONE BUT NOT LONELY

SWAMI SHRADDHANANDA

[Swami Shraddhananda, an Assistant Minister at the Vedanta Society of Northern California, San Francisco and a former Editor of *Udbodhan*, the Bengali organ of the Ramakrishna Order, has in this essay succinctly brought out the different types of 'aloneness' and stressed on that kind of it which is most profitable to man in the long run.—*Ed.*]

LONELINESS is many things. It is desolation, insecurity, fear, despondency, sadness and so on. It is not a simple but a complex feeling. Normally we never welcome loneliness. When circumstances force it upon us we try to counteract it as best we can. Sometimes we succeed, sometimes not.

There are different types of loneliness. The first may be called simple loneliness. You have gone abroad somewhere, away from your dear and near ones and from your familiar environment. In the new place you may have all comforts of living and company of people, too, yet you feel an emptiness. You are sad and eagerly look forward to returning home. This sort of loneliness is only temporary, as it leaves when you get back with your friends and relatives.

More distressing is the second type of loneliness when you have no relatives and friends, no resources, nobody to help or sympathize with you. You feel that you are utterly forlorn. Life is miserable and burdensome and seems to be meaningless. No wonder some

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people at such a plight would even go for suicide.

The third type of loneliness is that which comes to the lot of some great leaders in different fields of life. In spite of their sincere intentions and efforts to do good to society, they are misunderstood and misjudged. They feel that they are born ahead of their times. Jesus Christ is a good example in point. In the Bible we find him express his feeling of desolation on many occasions toward the end of his life. Abraham Lincoln who did so much for America was also a lonely man in the realm of his ideal. He said, 'I am really alone; there is no one to whom I can open my heart'. This great architect of American unity had to pay with his life for his magnanimity. A close student of the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda will also notice this loneliness in their moods occasionally as they were in the process of delivering their messages. 'To whom am I saying these things,' Sri Ramakrishna once soliloquized, 'who will understand?'

This feeling of isolation and sadness that great personalities have to face sometimes, does not bring the disastrous reaction accompanying the second type of loneliness. These great men know that their lot is part and parcel of the total mission of their lives. So they can bear their loneliness with equanimity and courage.

Loneliness in the spiritual life constitutes the fourth category. When a genuine desire for God is kindled in the heart, worldly life is bound to appear dull and vacant. The spiritual aspirant feels as if he were in a well where there is fire all around ready to burn him. The different loves for persons and objects no longer draw his interest. There is a feeling of fear and helplessness. A sense of void pervades his whole being which cannot be filled by any worldly acquisition, namely, friendship, wealth, honour, or enjoyment.

This loneliness is a necessary condition of spiritual life. That is why scriptures and spiritual teachers encourage the aspirants to cultivate this kind of loneliness. Unless the heart is emptied of all attachments and desires, the fulfilment of divine love or self-knowledge is not possible. We read in the *Kena Upaniṣad*: 'The wise attain immortality by turning away from this sense-world'. (*Kena Up.*, 2. 5)

The *Bhagavad Gītā* lists in the 13th chapter a number of qualities which a seeker of self-knowledge must cultivate. Among them are mentioned — विविक्तदेशसेवित्वम् — resorting to solitude and अरतिर्जनसंसदि — aversion to the society of men. So also Śankara teaches the disciple in his *Viveka-Chudamani* to look upon the world as a desolate wilderness. Modern psychology may sneer at such counsels, for on the surface they definitely seem to be antisocial. But we should remember that the scope of psychology is limited mostly to the behaviour and aspirations of the empirical man — the man who is bound by his animal instincts and whose mind cannot see beyond physico-chemical and biological forces. The aim of spiritual life on the other hand is to discover the true Self of man which is of the nature of eternally free pure consciousness, birthless, deathless, and timeless. In the process of this discovery the familiar values of our life must not be taken for granted. They have to be questioned, re-assessed, sublimated, and even surpassed.

The feeling of loneliness which is described as a criterion of spiritual longing is however basically different from those described under the first two categories. True, there are elements of emptiness, fear and anguish in the lonely mood of the earnest seeker of God but these elements do not affect his personality in the way they react on the worldly man. When the devotee cries, 'Oh Lord, the three worlds seem empty if Thou art not with me,'[1] the emptiness he conjectures is not the feeling of void experienced when some bereavement or loss of fortune comes to us. The fear of *saṁsāra* — transmigratory existence is not like the fear of worldly insecurity. The pain of separation from God does not compare with

[1] From a devotional song of the Brahmo Samaj which Swami Vivekananda was very fond of.

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the agony of a love-starved person. By spiritual loneliness a man can never become weak and comfortless. In the background of his mind there is a clear conviction of God's grace, the majesty of spiritual endeavour and the hope of His Vision.

However, spiritual loneliness is only an experience which has to be passed through in the early phase of our spiritual life. As we progress in our comprehension of spiritual reality, doubts begin to vanish and our heart is more and more filled with joy and peace. Frowns of *māyā* give place to the assuring smile of the Divine. The world no longer appears to be a blazing fire. It has been transformed into the kingdom of God. With Saint Paul we can then speak out the challenge: 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?'

The mystic life has well been described by the Neo-Platonic philosopher Plotinus as the flight of the alone to the alone. The transformation of the animal man to the divine man is a slow and silent process which can never take place in the glare of the noisy world. The control of the outgoing senses, the lifting of the dull dark mind to the light of super-sensuous understanding, the integration of diverse emotions around the one single mighty love of Spirit are tasks that the aspirant has to do quietly day after day without any murmur. It is like the blooming of the flower bud throughout the silent night into the beautiful fragrant flower of the morning. Yes, the traveller to the city of God is terribly alone from the worldly point of view. In the language of the *Bhagavad Gītā* (2. 69), he has to keep awake where the world at large is asleep and shut his eyes to what keeps the mass of mankind keenly alive. There is every likelihood of his being misunderstood and mistreated: he lives and moves in a world where he can rarely expect a companion.

And yet though alone, truly speaking, he is not lonely. Even the spiritual loneliness mentioned above which he has to face for some time in the initial stage of his 'sādhana' has nothing fearful about it. The mystic in fact feels himself blessed in being alone. From the spiritual point of view his experience is not of emptiness but fullness. So we hear a Sufi mystic (Jafar) singing: 'From earth below to the highest heaven, from heaven to deepest earth, I see Thee wherever I look: all that exists art Thou'.

Visualize the figure of Saint Francis of Assisi sitting on his bed in the stillness of the night and repeating hour after hour with all-absorbing fervour the sweetest and the most sacred song of his soul: 'My God, my all'. And at day-time wandering through woods, as he looks at the sun and the trees and the flowers he shouts in joy: 'My brethren, my brethren'. He joins the birds in their songs which to him is nothing but adoration to his Beloved God.

If the mystic is a *jñāni*, he experiences with the Sage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (7. 25. 1): 'I am below, I am above, I am behind, I am in the front, I am in the south, I am in the north, I am verily all this'. 'Identify with all' is the key-note of Self-knowledge.

It is possible then to be alone but not lonely. Loneliness is an affliction that cuts deeply through our life. But there is no earthly remedy for it. The cure has to be spiritual. If you have been deserted do not moan and groan. Take an opposite move if you can. Be alone with the Centre of reality and find yourself in the Company of the Infinite.

[2] *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Ch. 41.

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INDIAN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

(A plea and suggestions for making explicit what is implicit in Indian Thought)

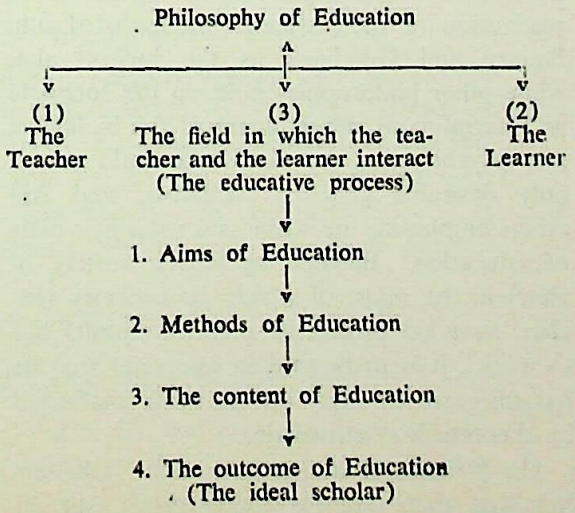
P. S. NAIDU

[Prof. P. S. Naidu, a former Professor of Psychology of the Allahabad University, is a member of the Terminology Commission of the University Grants Commission, New Delhi.—*Ed.*]

THE great leaders of Philosophy and architects of new systems of thought, be they of the East or of the West, were also great teachers in the exalted sense. They did not create noble ideas and ideals for their own private enjoyment. They wanted to share the benefits these creative forms could confer, with others. They wanted the lay and learned public to accept them and be uplifted by them. Such were Plato and Aristotle, Spinoza and Hegel, Śri Śankara and Acharya Rāmānuja. Every philosopher of note that the world has produced, is also a teacher of eminence and ability.

It is an inherent characteristic of creative philosophy that it seeks to propagate itself. In the West, Philosophy of Education as a separate discipline has come into its own. This is not surprising, because the general analytic attitude of the Western mind, coupled with the great urge for specialization has been resulting steadily in the emergence of new disciplines, some of which are of surprising novelty. I may mention here cybernetics, biosonics, programmed learning, and symbolic logic. In our country on the other hand we have been emphasizing a synthetic or global approach to human experience and to the intellectual disciplines arising out of such experience. It is, of course, good not to lose sight of the whole as a whole, but, at the same time it must be admitted that it is equally good, perhaps, it is better, to keep the whole in view and also to see and see steadily the parts of that whole which are real treasures hidden within it. One such treasure is 'Philosophy of Education' which is hidden in Indian Philosophy. Pedagogical principles implicit in Indian Philosophic thought are of inestimable worth. They must be made explicit, so that teachers may appreciate and assimilate this great treasure.

How are we to go about this task of evolving a Philosophy of Education from the great constructive and creative systems of thought in our country? Let us first fix the guide-lines for evolving any Philosophy of Education. In speaking of the Theory, Principles or Philosophy of Education, we have to clarify (1) what is our conception of the Teacher, what are the qualities which a teacher should have, who is an ideal teacher, (2) what is our image of a true disciple, and (3) what is the nature of the educative process by which the ideal teacher transforms the true disciple into an image of his own self. These three major dimensions of a Philosophy of Education may be exhibited thus :



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These three dimensions have been fully discussed in recent Western philosophies of Education. Mention may be made here of Butler's 'Four Philosophies'. The author begins with a historical survey of a given school of philosophy, then he passes on to expand the tenets of the school, and finally he evolves a philosophy of Education, which in many senses is peculiar to that school. He does not follow strictly the order of themes as shown in the tabular statement given above, but all of them are touched on in some form or other, in his discussions. However, there is due difficulty in the Western conceptions of Educational Philosophy. There is no consensus of opinion. Each school pulls against the others, with the result that the ordinary teacher, whose main task is to instruct his wards, feels puzzled. For instance 'the Teacher' is given the place of prime importance in idealistic philosophy of education, whereas he is pushed completely to the background in naturalistic philosophy. Pragmatic philosophy gives him a place somewhere in the middle ground. Some idealistic philosophies dare to view the learner as Divine in essence, whose destiny is immortality and who, if properly educated, can be transformed into the very image of the deity. Others, however, overemphasize the doctrine of 'Original Sin' and conceive of the educative process as one continuous discipline of chastising the child out of it. Again, in regard to aims of education, the best of Western philosophies speak of the realization of the sovereign values of Truth, Beauty and Goodness as the highest aim, while other philosophies hold up the complete and harmonious development of the biological and psychological nature of the child as the only desirable goal of education, and still others emphasize the social and socialistic aims of education. Bewildering is the variety of views in the midst of which the ordinary teacher, keen on producing practical results has to work. It is to be said to his credit that he has managed to carry on his work unaffected by theoretical controversies.

The position in Indian Philosophy is better. Not that there are no controversies, yet, in the midst of the multiplicity of metaphysical views, near unanimity has been achieved in regard to the basic conceptions about the teacher, the taught and the educative process. These fundamentals of an Indian Philosophy of Education should be leased out of the matrix in which they are embedded and presented to the public, lay and learned, in an easily intelligible form. A few guide-lines for such a presentation are indicated in the following paragraphs.

When a student surveys our classical literature from the Vedas and Upaniṣads, through the Darśanas and commentaries of the great Āchāryas, down to the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna and the writings of Swami Vivekananda, one finds emerging certain clear views about the master and the disciple and about education as a whole.

The Teacher

The image of the teacher that emerges when we take an over-all view of the demands made of him down the ages is this :

The Teacher should have perfect mastery over the objectives, aims and goals which he prescribes for his pupils, and perfect knowledge of every inch of the path along which the learner has to traverse. The teacher should have covered the path himself and should have realized the goals. It goes without saying that the teacher should have full knowledge of the psychology of the learner and of the learning process. Over and above all this knowledge, he must have the global skill to communicate the right thing at the right moment. And the teacher should continue to be a learner himself all his life. Even a Jīvanmukta should continue his spiritual practices in the interests of the welfare of humanity.

The Teacher's personal life should be pure and stainless. Laxity which may be tolerated in other professions is unpardonable in teaching.

The Pupil

One thing on which all schools of thought in our country are agreed is that the pupil

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should be a Brahmacharin. Rigour of continence in thought, word and deed is the first and the last requirement for disciplehood. Given this condition, everything else will follow. Faith, reverence, health, merit, energy and intelligence can be easily achieved by one who observes strict Brahmacharya. As Swami Vivekananda used to say one who maintains strict Brahmacharya for twelve years develops a new organ of knowledge for penetrating the innermost secrets of life.

The Educative Process

With an ideal teacher and an ideal pupil, the factors in the field of their mutual interaction resolve themselves easily and in a simple manner. The research scholar has ample original sources, not only in our philosophic treatises, but also in the records of actual practices in our ancient University centres of learning, for developing principles of education, methods of education, content of education, and the code of discipline in education.

As stated earlier, it is only intended to suggest the guide-lines for detailed investigation. A complete philosophy of education may be developed by working out the suggestions in this article.

PANCADAŚĪ

CHAPTER II

दिने दिने स्वप्नसुप्त्योरधीते विस्मृतेऽप्ययम्। परेद्युर्नानधीतः स्यात्तद्वद्विद्या न नश्यति ॥ १०७ ॥

Diné diné, every day ; *adhīté*, what has been studied (of the Vedas); *svapna suptyoḥ*, in dream and deep sleep ; *vismṛte 'pi*, though forgotten ; *ayaṁ*, that ; *paredyuḥ*, next day ; *anadhītaḥ*, unread ; *na syāt*, will not remain ; *tadwat*, likewise ; *vidyā*, the knowledge of Brahman ; *na naśyati*, is not lost.

107. Though what is studied of the Veda is forgotten in dream and deep sleep, the person does not stop from learning it again the next day, so also (in the states of unconsciousness and at the moment of death) the knowledge of Brahman once attained is neither destroyed nor lost.

प्रमाणोत्पादिता विद्या प्रमाणं प्रबलं विना । न नश्यति न वेदान्तात्प्रबलं मानमीक्ष्यते ॥ १०८ ॥

Vidyā, the knowledge of Brahman ; *pramāṇotpāditā*, engendered by evidence (such as the Vedas, logic and immediate experience); *prabalaṁ*, powerful ; *pramāṇaṁ vinā*, without evidence ; *na naśyati*, is not lost ; *vedāntāt*, than Vedanta ; *prabalaṁ*, powerful ; *mānaṁ*, evidence ; *na īkṣaté*, is not seen.

108. Knowledge of Brahman engendered by the evidence of Śruti etc. is not lost without a strong contrary evidence ; than Vedanta there is no evidence more powerful.

Note : So the conclusion is Brahma Jñāna once attained is never lost.

तस्माद्वेदान्तसंसिद्धं सदद्वैतं न बाध्यते । अन्तकालेऽप्यतो भूतविवेकाच्चिर्वृतिः स्थिता ॥ १०९ ॥

Tasmāt, therefore ; *antakāle 'pi*, even at the last moment ; *vedānta saṁsiddhaṁ*, the reality which has been established by the Upaniṣads ; *sadadvaitaṁ*,

(*Continued on Page* 34)

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GOOD LIFE AND GREAT LIFE

SWAMI BUDHANANDA

[Swami Budhananda is an ex-Editor of the *Vedanta Kesari*. In this interesting article he has dealt with life that is good and that which is great; by great life here he means the life of '*śreyas*' of the Upaniṣads, as those lives alone are great who benefit mankind as a whole and forever.—*Ed.*]

EVERY one of us has to face quite a few challenges in life, small and big. There is no escaping them. The greatest challenge of life, however, is life itself. In this mysterious phenomenon called life, very few of us seem to have any idea how much potentiality has been kept hidden.

Swami Vivekananda says :

> 'Do you know how much energy, how many powers, how many forces, are still lurking behind that frame of yours? What scientist has known all that is in man? Millions of years have passed since man came here, and yet but one infinitesimal part of his powers has been manifested. Therefore you must not say that you are weak. How do you know what possibilities lie behind that degradation on the surface? You know but little of that which is within you; for behind you is the ocean of infinite power and blessedness.' [1]

Many of us do not actually live, but only exist. Living will be possible only by accepting the challenge of the totality of the life's potential as indicated here by Swami Vivekananda, in the passage we have just noted.

What does a normal man want in his life? He wants, if he is an American, a home with central heating for winter, air-conditioning in summer, a faithful wife, sufficient money to pay off bills and for emergencies of all sorts, healthy, obedient and intelligent children; two cars changeable every two years, a trailer, a country home for summer if possible, security bonds, Blue Cross, some friends who will occasionally invite him for dinner, and send Christmas gifts; some leisure for cultivating so-called higher sensibilities; and finally, a name as a good man.

His common sense tells him that happiness is in not overshooting one's mark and getting a heart attack. It is not in high speed, but in obeying traffic rules, social norms, forms of decency. It is not in standing out and taking the storm on his head, but in being one among many equals. He therefore thinks democracy is the mother of good life.

Of course, he will not accept that good life is stagnation, even though a streamlined stagnation. He will forcefully argue : No, that is not at all the case. Good life means removing the evils from society, at least from the locus of one's own life. And if one does that, why, he has pushed the world further on the highway of progress.

He thinks that seeking personal happiness is the greatest thing a normal man can do. For what would be a greater unselfishness? How does he make the world happy without himself being happy? Therefore, according to him, good life alone can be a normal man's highest aspiration.

But according to Vedanta, the good life is a golden cage — if the bad life is an iron cage — in which the bird has been caught.

Bad life is brutal and self-corroding. Good life is making illusions homely, and ignorance domesticated.

Being trapped, we paint and decorate the cage — that, exactly, is good life. Sri Ramakrishna says :

> 'Seeing the gleaming water pass through the valve of the bamboo trap placed in rice

[1] Swami Vivekananda : *Complete Works*, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Himalayas. India, Vol. II, 1963, p. 301.

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fields, the small fish enter the trap with great glee. But having once entered, they cannot get out again. Similarly, foolish men enter the meshes of the world, lured by its false glitter; but it is so much easier to enter than to renounce, that they are caught like little fish and imprisoned for good.'[2]

In the good life, bondage cannot be questioned, for it is the norm. In the good life, illusion cannot be volatilized, for it is the form. In good life, the price we pay is called 'love'. But in fact oftener than not what is it but hardened attachment? In good life, our conduct is said to be guided by ethics. But what is the clever man's ethics but fear with a presentable mask, an adjustment of convenience? If we should say these are the words of a cynic, a misanthrope, well, that again is the great *māyā* of good life! It makes us feel good about things we should be uncomfortable about; it makes us glorify things about which we should be ashamed. We have no way of knowing that we are not knowing. So, that we know, is no knowledge, but not knowing even that we are not knowing. To wear a mask of intelligence instead of feeling agonized about our primeval ignorance, and giving an impression of feeling very good about it, is called sophistication, after which is decadence. When the sophisticate knows better, instead of being bold without grounds, he starts thinking.

Great life is not a higher degree of, or intensified, good life. Great life is a different life altogether. Yet there is hardly any way to great life except through good life. While good life is taking illusion as our province, great life is taking reality as our province.

Sri Ramakrishna points out that even the *sattva guṇa* is a robber. He explains the idea in a parable:

'Once a man was going through a forest, when three robbers fell upon him and robbed him of all his possessions. One of the robbers said, "What is the use of keeping this man alive?" So saying, he was about to kill him with his sword, when the second robber interrupted him, saying: "Oh, no! What is the use of killing him? Tie him hand and foot and leave him here." The robbers bound him hand and foot and went away. After a while the third robber returned and said to the man: "Ah, I am sorry. Are you hurt? I will release you from your bonds." After setting the man free, the thief said: "Come with me. I will take you to the public highway." After a long time they reached the road. Then the robber said: "Follow this road. Over there is your house." At this the man said: "Sir, you have been very good to me. Come with me to my house." "Oh, no!" the robber replied. "I can't go there. The police will know it."'[3]

Sri Ramakrishna concludes the parable, saying:

'This world itself is the forest. The three robbers prowling here are *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. It is they that rob a man of the Knowledge of Truth. *Tamas* wants to destroy him. *Rajas* binds him to the world. But *sattva* rescues him from the clutches of *rajas* and *tamas*. Under the protection of *sattva*, man is rescued from anger, passion, and the other evil effects of *tamas*. Further, *sattva* loosens the bonds of the world. But *sattva* also is a robber. It cannot give him the ultimate Knowledge of Truth, though it shows him the road leading to the Supreme Abode of God. Setting him on the path, *sattva* tells him: "Look yonder. There is your home." Even *sattva* is far away from the Knowledge of Brahman.'[4]

Every wall can be a door. But life is even more. Every robber can rob. What, however, is more, he can even stop robbery. He can break his own image and make it anew. Self-iconoclasm of the unenlightened is a progressive virtue, very uncomfortable though it may

[2] *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Himalayas, India, 1934, p. 89.

[3] *Guna*, a technical term of Sankhya Philosophy (one of the six systems of Hindu Philosophy), is also used in the same sense in Vedanta Philosophy. The term *guna* is popularly, but inadequately, translated as 'quality'. The more comprehensive translation would be 'substantive force', for *guna* stands for both matter and force in nature. The entire phenomenal universe — characterized by name and form — including the psychic phenomena is composed of three *gunas*: *sattva* (equilibrium), *rajas* (attraction), and *tamas* (inertia).

[4] 'M': *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, translated by Swami Nikhilananda, Ramakrishna-Vedanta Centre, New York, 1942, pp. 267-8.

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be. Mile-posts are not home. They can be hang-posts if we do not continue to move.

In Brahman alone is great life. It is the life of the *Guṇātīta*, one who has travelled beyond the *guṇas*, that is great life. That again is said to be the life of the man of steady wisdom, *sthita-prajñā*.

Sri Krishna goes so far as to say :

> 'The Vedas deal with the three *guṇas*, but you must go beyond the *guṇas*, O Arjuna, beyond the pairs of opposites, ever steadfast in purity, careless of possessions, full of the awareness of Ātman.' [5]

We must remember that higher religion does not aim at good life but at great life. As Swami Vivekananda puts it :

> 'Vedanta says that you are pure and perfect, and that there is a state beyond good and evil, and that is your own nature. It is higher than good. Good is only a lesser differentiate than evil. . . .' [6]

In the Vedantic way of life, this we have to understand clearly and remember constantly. In this way of life we have to expose ourselves constantly to the scathing rays of truth to keep our movement of thought and aspiration in perspective. Perpetual inner adventure is the secret. Not that we have to despise anything, not that we have to sneer at anything, but we must be constantly on the move, alert and wakeful, until the goal is reached.

Illusion will stand before us as substance. We must be alert. Alertness is more than waking ; it is staying awake through the darkness of the noon, or the moon of midnight. We must have the sense of humour to see the play as the play. If anyone thinks great life is only for the few, and not for us the many, not for the Americans, — that is not Vedanta. If anyone thinks that great life is possible only for the learned, for the well fed, for the prosperous, — that again is not Vedanta. According to Vedanta, great life is the destiny of everyone. Conscious movement towards this destiny constitutes the truly spiritual life. If we are satisfied with good life, we are not yet truly spiritual.

Renunciation is the basis of great life. Renunciation signifies an inner dynamism which propels the individual to experience the truest, purest and noblest in him and to manifest it in his life.

Life will inexorably make one great someday in infinite time. But are we prepared to pay the price of making life great today ? That is the question. Intelligence is in finding one's way to do deliberately what one will be forced to do anyway.

However covetable may be the position of a good life, the aspirant must leave that behind and move on. Then he will see good life no good after all ; so-called security is nothing but enslavement.

The true aspirant must be a *musāfir*, a wayfarer, on the highway of truth. In the Vedas, in some wonderful passages it is said :

> 'There is no prosperity without constant movement, so we have heard from our superiors. Even a great man living constantly among his relations becomes insignificant. The Lord is the friend of the wanderer. So march on.
>
> 'Of one who always keeps moving, legs become beautiful, body strong and healthy. His sins are destroyed by pilgrimage. So march on.
>
> 'The fortune of a man keeps sitting while he is sitting, stands when he is standing, sleeps when he is sleeping and moves on when he moves. So march on.
>
> 'When a man sleeps it is Kali yuga for him. When he sits up it is Dwāpara yuga. When he stands up it is Treta, and when he moves on there begins the Krita yuga. So march on.
>
> 'While wandering, one gets honey, and sweet fruits. . . .' [7]

How few of us are aware that the 'honey' we get without 'wandering' is just poison. To the earthworm, mud is the heaven. But to soar, the skylark requires a sky. When we want religion to be an ally of our stagnation, God will break up civilizations and fling peo-

[5] *Bhagavad-Gita*, II. 45.

[6] Swami Vivekananda : *Complete Works*, V. 282.

[7] *Aitareya Brahmana*, XXXIII. 15.

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ple in trackless miseries, for He is the friend of the wanderer. This is, in Christ's language, 'passing the sword'. Dwell in darkness, screeching will become your language. Move with the storm, lightning will become your language.

This inner dynamism alone can tear us away from the respectable illusions of good life. Sri Ramakrishna says in a parable :

> 'Go forward. A wood-cutter once entered a forest to gather wood. A Brahmachari said to him, "Go forward". He obeyed the injunction and discovered some sandalwood trees. After a few days he reflected, "The holy man asked me to go forward. He didn't tell me to stop here". So he went forward and found a silver-mine. After a few days he went still farther and discovered a gold-mine, and next, mines of diamonds and precious stones. With these he became immensely rich.'[8]

Self-satisfaction of the unillumined is a terrific pitfall. Swami Brahmananda used to urge the aspirants :

> 'Onward, onward! Never be satisfied with your growth. Try to create a burning dissatisfaction within yourself. Say to yourself : "What progress am I making? None!".'[9]

It is not restlessness, but yearning for liberation, that eventually leads from the finite threshold of good life to the infinity of great life.

But how long should one travel like this? As long as one has not gone beyond all relational needs of life, one must travel. One will not have to travel further if one has reached that inner situation wherein he does not even think of security, he does not require another to be happy, he does not fear to lose anything or hanker to gain anything. That is the supreme state, to which every pilgrim is bound.

It is a very long pilgrimage for the unenterprising. But, as Patanjali says,[10] for the energetic, the end of the pilgrimage comes quickly. Let not the pilgrim stay long in the wayside inn, which is good life, lest he should be robbed of what he possesses for further movement.

The distinction of good life and great life is made by a beautiful conversation between the herdsman Dhaniya and the Buddha in the Buddhist scripture *Suttanipata*. This section is called 'Dhaniya sutta' :[11]

> '"I have boiled my rice, I have milked my cows," — so said the herdsman Dhaniya, — "I am living together with my fellows near the banks of the Mahi river, my house is covered, the fire is kindled : therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky!"
>
> '"I am free from anger, free from stubbornness," — so said Bhagavat (Buddha), — "I am abiding for one night near the banks of the Mahi river, my house is uncovered, the fire of passions is extinguished : therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky!"
>
> '"Gadflies are not to be found with me," — so said the herdsman Dhaniya, — "in meadows abounding with grass the cows are roaming, and they can endure rain when it comes : therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky!"
>
> '"By me is a well-constructed raft," — so said Bhagavat, — "I have passed over to Nibbana, I have reached the further bank, having overcome the torrent of passions ; there is no further use for a raft : therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky!"
>
> '"My wife is obedient, not wanton," — so said the herdsman Dhaniya, — "for a long time she has been living together with me, she is winning, and I hear nothing wicked of her : therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky!"
>
> '"My mind is obedient, delivered from all worldliness," — so said Bhagavat, — "it has for a long time been highly cultivated and well-subdued, there is no longer anything wicked in me : therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky!"
>
> '"I support myself by my own earnings," — so said the herdsman Dhaniya — "and

[8] *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 109.

[9] *The Eternal Companion : Life and Teachings of Swami Brahmananda*, by Swami Prabhavananda, The Vedanta Press, 1946, Vedanta Place, Hollywood, 1944, p. 116.

[10] Patanjali : *Yoga-sutras*, I. 21.

[11] Vide : *Sacred Books of the East*, edited by F. Max Muller, Vol. X, Part II, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1898, p. 3.

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my children are all about me, healthy ; I hear nothing wicked of them : therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky ! "

' " I am no one's servant," — so said Bhagavat, — " with what I have gained I wander about in all the world, there is no need for me to serve : therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky ! "

' " I have cows, I have calves," — so said the herdsman Dhaniya, — " I have cows in calf and heifers, and I have also a bull as lord over the cows : therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky ! "

' " I have no cows, I have no calves," — so said Bhagavat, — " I have no cows in calf and no heifers, and I have no bull as a lord over the cows : therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky ! "

' " The stakes are driven in, and cannot be shaken," — so said the herdsman Dhaniya, — " the ropes are made of *munja* grass, new and well-made, the cows will not be able to break them : therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky ! "

' " Having, like a bull, rent the bonds ; having, like an elephant, broken through the *galukkhi* creeper, I shall not again enter into a womb : therefore, if thou like, rain, O sky ! "

'Then at once a shower poured down, filling both sea and land. Hearing the sky raining, Dhaniya spoke thus :

' " No small gain indeed has accrued to us since we have seen Bhagavat ; we take refuge in thee, O thou who art endowed with the eye of wisdom ; be thou our master, O great Muni ! "

' " Both my wife and myself are obedient ; if we lead a holy life before Sugata, we shall conquer birth and death, and put an end to pain."

' " He who has sons has delight in sons," — so said the wicked Mara, — " and he who has cows has delight likewise in cows ; for *upādhi* is the delight of man, but he who has no *upādhi* has no delight."

' " He who has sons has care with his sons," — so said Bhagavat, — " he who has cows has likewise care with his cows ; for *upādhi* is the cause of people's cares, but he who has no *upādhi* has no care." '

Such is the distinction between good life and great life. We cannot be great without being good. But we can be good and goody-goody, and not great at all. The good life is necessarily less than great life. The great life is necessarily more than the good life. Good life is somewhere on the way. Great life is home. Good life is pleasure and also sorrow. Great life is same-sightedness, steady wisdom, beyond all joy and sorrow. Of good life, death is the master. Of great life, death is the servant. We must therefore aspire for great life. For if we aspire for it we at least have good life. But if we aspire for good life, we may not have even that.

He will be a true friend of the modern man who can anyhow inculcate in him an enthusiasm for great life. There are problems inherent in smallness which can be solved only by being great. Man must become great or pay for spiritual slum-dwelling, for staying puny.

Even the aspiration for great life is a great saving power.

PANCADAŚĪ — (*Continued from Page* 29)

Reality without a second ; *na bādhyate,* is not suppressed ; *ataḥ,* so ; *bhūta-vivekāt,* by the practice of discrimination about the elements (from Reality); *nirvṛtiḥ,* liberation ; *sthitā,* gets steady.

109. Therefore, even at the moment of death the Reality which is One without a second and has been established by the Upaniṣads and realized by the person, is not suppressed. So, the conclusion is, that by the practice of discrimination of the elements (from Reality) emancipation gets steady.

Here ends Chapter II of Pancadaśī

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Symposium

THE IDEA OF GOD IN ADVAITA

T. M. P. MAHADEVAN

[Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D., is the Director, Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras and is an author of many books on Advaita. He has herein dealt with the meaning of God in Advaita as also how God has a place in Advaita Philosophy.—*Ed.*]

THE paradox inherent in the idea of God is expressed by F. H. Bradley thus : God is not God, till he has become all in all, and a God which is all in all is not the God of religion. The solution to this paradox lies, according to him, in the admission that 'God is but an aspect, and that must mean but an appearance, of the Absolute'. Some Western theists, who reject both absolute idealism and traditional theism subscribe to the doctrine of a finite God, who is not all in all, or even omnipotent and omniscient, but is endowed with only more power and knowledge than what we possess.

Neither the view of the absolute idealist, nor that of the unconventional theist is acceptable to Advaita. The ultimate Reality, Brahman, it is true, is unconditioned, without attributes, without qualifications. But it is the same Reality that is called God when viewed in relation to the empirical world and the empirical souls. Brahman is the same, as *nirguṇa* (attributeless) and as *saguṇa* (with attributes). There are not *two* Brahmans, as wrongly alleged by some critics. Even when God is referred to as the lower (*apara*) Brahman, what is meant is not that Brahman has become lower in status as God, but that God is Brahman looked at from the lower level of relative experience. These are two forms (*dvirūpa*) of Brahman and not two Brahmans : Brahman as-it-is-in-itself, and Brahman as-it-is-in-relation-to-the-world. The former is the unconditioned Brahman ; the latter is Brahman as conditioned by nomenclature, configuration, and change.

God, thus, is conditioned Brahman ; the conditioning principle is called *māyā*. As *māyā* is not a reality alongside or apart from Brahman, it does not make for the introduction of any real duality. All that Godhead requires for its status is assumed duality, and not real duality. Ether is spoken of as ether-at-large in relation to pot-ether, etc. ; in and for itself, there is no difference. Similarly, God is said to possess omniscience, omnipotence, etc., as distinguished from the soul which is parviscient, with limited power, etc. In Itself, Godhead knows no distinctions, and cannot be categorized. According to one version of the reflection-theory (*pratibiṁba-vāda*), it is to be admitted, God is described as the reflection of Brahman in *māyā*. But, it should be remembered that, according to this view, the reflection is identical with the prototype. The other version of the reflection-theory which is more generally accepted compares God to the prototype-face, and the souls alone to reflections of the face in mirrors. In any case, God, in Advaita, is not a phantom-creation or an ideal construction of the individual's mind. The idea of God is not to be brushed aside as an irrelevant postulation or as an impossible and inconsistent concept. The place of God in Advaita is neither pernicious nor precarious ; on the contrary, the concept is quite pertinent to, and precious for, Advaita-experience.

If the soul and God are one, where is the place for God in Advaita ? it may be asked. The reply is simple. Even in the identity statements 'That thou art', 'I am Brahman',

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etc., it is not the identity of the soul with God that is taught. It is precisely because there could be no identity between the primary meanings of the two words in each statement, viz., 'the individual soul' and 'God', that recourse is had to the secondary implication. What these statements teach is not that the soul and God are one, but that the secondary meaning of the two words is the same, viz., the unconditioned Self. What Advaita tells us is that the Ātman is Brahman, and not that the jīva (soul) is Īśvara (God). There is a text of the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* which says with reference to the self of the state of deep sleep : 'This is the lord of all, this is the knower of all, this is the inner ruler of all. This is the source of all, the origin and end, indeed, of beings'. The meaning of this text is not that the empirical jīva is identical with Īśvara ; the text should be regarded as an eulogy of Prājña, the self in the state of sleep where there is no duality whatsoever. The passage may also be taken as indicating the correlation between the individual form of the Self and its cosmic form. There are certain meditations in which the aspirant is asked to identify himself with the Deity : the highest phase in the scale of meditation assumes the form, 'I am Brahman'. But, here, what is required is assumed or superimposed identification, and not real identity. When one has to speak of, or do with, the soul *and* God, one has to recognize the distinction between the two. Advaita does not seek to abolish the distinction. If God be compared to the sea and the soul to its wave, it would be proper to say that the soul is a property of God and not that God is a property of the soul, even as it would be to say that the wave belongs to the sea and not that the sea belongs to the wave. It has been declared that the duality assumed for the sake of devotion is more beautiful than even non-duality (*bhaktyartham kalpitam dvaitam advaitād-api sundaram*).

The place of God in Advaita may be understood from the standpoints of both metaphysics and axiology. God is to be regarded as the ground of the universe, and as the goal of meditation. In relation to the world, God is the basic Existence ; in relation to the soul, He is the supreme Value.

God is not *a* cause among causes producing the world ; He is the whole and the sole cause. The view of an Artificer — God manufacturing things out of extraneous matter is not favoured by Advaita. God is both the material and efficient cause of the world. Since the idea of cause is associated with the concept of time, it is probably better to consider God to be the ultimate *ground* of things. Godhead or Brahman is that from which beings arise, in which they reside after arising, and into which they disappear at the end. When one contemplates the nature and constitution of the universe, one is struck with wonder. The universe is differentiated by names and forms ; it includes many agents and enjoyers ; its constituents are regulated in respect of place, time, cause, action and fruit ; the design which it reveals cannot be even conceived by the mind. For such an infinitely ordered and variegated universe, no other cause or ground could be postulated than the omniscient and omnipotent God. Neither Primal Nature, nor a set of atoms, nor non-existence, nor the individual souls are equal to the task of the world-projection. God alone can serve as the adequate ground. The argument which has now been advanced and other similar arguments should not be regarded as proofs for the existence of God. God is not the end-result of syllogistic reasoning. The arguments are useful only as helps that render intelligible the intuitively discerned and scripturally declared truth.

God is not only the world-ground but also the moral governor. The law of *karma* which operates in the moral realm has God for its guide. If the souls reap the consequences of their actions, good for good, and ill for ill, it is because of God's dispensation expressed in the form of the *kārmic* law. To the Mīmāṁsaka's contention that *karma* can and does function by itself, the Vedāntin's reply is that *karma* which is inert does require an intelligent controller for its operation. No finite intelligent agent can be the controller

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of *karma*. In fact, the agent-souls are the victims of *karma*; although this statement should not be taken to mean that the souls are playthings in the hands of Fate. Each soul certainly deserves the fruits of its own deeds. *Karma* is the principle of justice that matches deserts with deeds. And, the dispenser of justice, the inner immortal ruler, is God. This is, however, not the same as saying that God is connected with the law in a merely administrative capacity of Paymaster. He is both the Law-Giver and the Law. He resides within the souls and rules them. His rulership has for its ultimate aim the liberation of souls. The world which He has projected out of Himself is the vale of soul-making.

The ends that man seeks are prosperity (*abhyudaya*) and the supreme good (*niḥśreyasa*). Prosperity, whether in this world or in the next, is temporal; the supreme good, which is release from bondage to the temporal process, is eternal. In the gaining of either of these ends, it is necessary to crave for the grace of God. Four categories of devotees are mentioned in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: people in distress (*ārta*), those who desire to accumulate wealth (*arthārthī*), the seekers of metaphysical knowledge (*jijñāsu*), and the knowers of the Self (*jñānī*). Of these, the first two are those who regard prosperity as their end. It is true that one may strive for removal of distress or accumulation of wealth without calling on God. But if one waits on God for the fulfilment of even these limited objectives, then these very successes will prepare the person concerned for wanting to pursue the higher path which leads to Self-knowledge. And, it is by gaining knowledge that comes through God's grace that one gets released from bondage (Śaṅkara: *Sūtra-bhāṣya*, II, iii, 41; *tadanugraha-hetukenaiva vijñānena mokṣasiddhir bhavitum arhati*).

The devotee worships God in various forms and under different names. It is the same God that takes on a variety of forms and names through His power of *māyā*. He assumes the form which the devotee chooses, and responds to the name by which He is called. Whenever *dharma* is threatened, God incarnates Himself in order to preserve it for the world. Although unborn and without body, He appears to be born as it were, to be embodied as it were. In order to shower His grace on the devotee in the most concrete mode, He makes the Images that are made for Him alive with Divinity. It is true that the highest way of worship is to see God everywhere, as all in all. But for most people, limited as they are, unevolved as they are, this becomes difficult, if not impossible. For their sake, God assumes limited forms and definite names. Starting from the most crude and narrow modes of worship, the devotee should progress to nobler and broader modes. The grades are indicated in the following verse:

prathamā pratimā pūjā
japastotrāṇi madhyamā
uttamā mānasī pūjā
so'haṁ pūjottamottamā.

'The first stage is Image-worship; the next consists in *japa* and prayer; still higher is mental worship; the highest is of the form "I am He"'. The meditation which is of the form 'I am He' — if it does not result in the dawn of wisdom in the present life — leads the aspirant to what is called 'gradual release' (*karma-mukti*). The belief is that at the death of his present body, the aspirant gains identity with the Creator Brahmā, and at the end of the present *Kalpa* (cosmic age) he is released along with Brahmā.

While it is true that Advaita seeks to go beyond theism, it is not to be confused with atheism or anti-theism. The supreme Reality is absolutely unconditioned; it is super-personal. But it appears as if personal in order to serve as the ground of the universe, and as the object of adoration for man. It is not that Brahman is degraded into Īśvara; on the contrary, it is Īśvara that is realized to be Brahman in plenary experience. It is as God that the Absolute becomes the pivot of the universe, and as the paradigm of perfection for the soul. The progress towards Advaita-perfection, nay even the inclination towards Advaita, the cultivation of taste for it, becomes possible by virtue of the grace of God.

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Īśvarānugrahād-eva puṁsām
advaita-vāsanā,
mahad-bhaya-paritrāṇa
dvitṛṇāṁ upajāyate.

'It is by God's grace alone that the leaning towards Advaita comes to a few people (two or three) — a leaning that will save them from the great fear (of transmigration).'

Symposium

MYTHICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL ELEMENTS IN CHRISTIAN CONCEPTS OF GOD

CLARENCE SHUTE

[Dr. Clarence Shute, of the Department of Philosophy, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts, U.S.A., is not new to our readers having contributed to the *Vedanta Kesari* on two other occasions also. In this article he has 'explored the hypothesis that the spontaneous, lofty insights expressed in the rich imagery of one concrete religion are incommensurate with the theological doctrines formulated in philosophical categories'.—*Ed.*]

WITHIN the Christian Bible, the pre-Christian *Old Testament* has a fascination of its own unmatched by that of the *New*. Spanning centuries of time, it presents the spectacle of God becoming manifest in history; or, it could be said, by the spectacle of man becoming ever *differently* aware of the Divine.

For example, there is the magnificent story of the three men who visited Abraham in the cool of the day. After the customary hospitality a conversation took place in which the voice of the three men cannot be distinguished from the voice of God. It was revealed to Abraham that Sarah, far past the age to conceive children, would bear him a son. And then, before departing, the men also revealed that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were to be visited to see if they were as wicked as report had made them out. When they were gone, 'Abraham stood yet before the Lord. And Abraham drew near, and said, "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"' (Genesis, 18: 22-25).

THE AMBIVALENCE OF THE DIVINE

'*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*' What sounds out clearly from this mythical utterance is not the manifest argument for justice, but Abraham's implied notion of God. The experiences of an already long life had hammered into his consciousness the awareness of a Power which was felt in the forces of nature and in the crucial decisions of life. It was a ruthless power which would one day command that he send away the mother of his first son and still later that he slay his second son, the son promised this day. It was a judging power — that is, a power which made distinctions among men and meted out rewards and punishments. But the argument of his prayer about Sodom, where lived his nephew, shows clearly that Abraham was much more certain of the moral demand of justice than he was of the just character of God.

The ambivalence of the divine is a motif which is by no means present everywhere in the Christian Bible, but certainly its presence is felt from the first book of the *Old Testament* to the last book of the *New*. Limitations

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of space forbid taking up the picture of God which emerges in some of the Psalms, in the poetic book of *Job*, in Jesus being led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil, in Christ's own picture of the final judgment and, supremely, in the *Revelation of Saint John the Divine*. In the latter the images in which the wrath of God is pictured are characterized by the psychologist C. G. Jung as displaying the brutal impact of the 'collision of opposites' more severely than he had encountered in the dreams and fantasies of his patients except in severe psychosis. Indeed, if a Christian who had never known of this book (and there are very few who have read it) were told it was a sacred book of a non-Christian religion, he surely would take it to be a religion believing in a savage God.

Now if one takes the view that the essence of revelation is not a supernatural conveying of information to man's mind but is the spontaneous, self-authenticating illumination which arises in confronting the realities of experience, then the ambivalence of the divine which is so widely manifested in myth can well be interpreted as the expression of contradictions which characterize human nature in its hidden depths. And beyond that lies not so much the contradiction in nature at large as the pervading of all nature by the law of death. Life lives only on life.

But what happens to the biblical, mythical insight of the divine nature embracing a totality of opposites when Christian theology is developed? Theological ideas which time shows to have survival power do not come from mere armchair speculation. They grow out of the conflict which is generated when the mythical expression of religious experience confronts a hostile world. In the early years of the Christian era Christianity was looked upon as a dangerous, diversive movement. Kierkegaard would add that it was so looked upon because it *was* dangerous and diversive, and that in his day it was no longer Christianity because it had ceased to be such. Perhaps Paul was correct when he said that 'not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise'. (1 Cor. 1 : 26f). But if that were the case in Paul's day there came a change in the divine strategy in the following centuries. Wise men after the flesh—that is to say, men of worldly culture and profound intellects — found themselves converted from secular culture to Christian faith. These men were a different breed from Paul. He understood that the paradox of Christianity would always be a stumbling block to man's natural mind and he knew that nothing but the tension generated by such offence would lead to Christian faith. But the early theologians were, in the main, men who were driven by a passion for rationality. On the one hand they were eager to put down the view of the worldly-wise that Christianity was an ignorant superstition. On the other they were so impressed with the necessity of correct thought that they passionately desired to protect the Christian faith from the erosiveness of erroneous thought. There followed a radical departure from the simplicity of *New Testament* faith, under the direction of philosophical ideas largely derived from Greece but coloured and developed by others, notably the great Jewish thinker Philo. Two governing concepts can be singled out for special emphasis: that of the nature of the divine in Plato and Aristotle, and that of the *Logos* in Greek philosophy, from Heraclitus to the Stoics and transformed by Philo for the interpretation of the Jewish scriptures.

In Plato culminates the Greek philosophical criticism of mythical theology and in Aristotle culminates the construction of philosophical theology. Aristotle wrote little on theology, but what he did write was not marginal. His theology is the capstone of his whole philosophy, without which his metaphysics would have been a truncated colossus.

The main target of Plato's criticism of mythical theology was the lies which the poets told about the gods, attributing to them human characters with a blend of all human vices as well as virtues. He could not stand such passages in Homer as the narration of Zeus's

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union with Hera in the forest and the participation of nature in the celebration of their nuptials. He could look upon this only as a description of Zeus's excessive lust, showing that he had no eye for the beautiful erotic imagery in which the nature of the divine and its relation to the natural order are shown in myths the world over. Just what 'God' means for Plato is hard to say; in *Timaeus*, Plato's own creation myth, he appears as the World-Builder, while in the *Republic* it is strongly suggested to the reader that he intends the supreme form — that of the Good — to be taken as God. But for our problem both come to the same thing, since the World-Builder is all good, and strives to make his creation as good as the resistance he encounters will allow. In other words; the complex of opposites, of love and wrath, justice and injustice, of creation and destruction which characterize mythical motifs in both the *Old* and the *New Testaments*, must disappear in a philosophically developed theology.

Both Plato's criticism of mythical theology and his positive doctrine of the forms or ideas played a large role in the development of Christian theology in the early middle ages. When Aristotle became the dominant Greek influence in the thirteenth century, formal doctrine concerning the nature of God reached its culmination in the writing of St. Thomas Aquinas. This great thinker agreed with St. Augustine that every being is good. A thing is evil only in the sense of lacking or being deficient in being. Hence when Aquinas argues for the perfection of God, a perfection which includes the perfections of all things, it is nevertheless perfection in the sense of C. G. Jung, who contrasts *perfection* with *completeness*. The ground of evil does not therefore exist in God since there *is* no ground of evil. Further, St. Thomas takes from Aristotle the view that God is the Form of all forms. Although he transforms Aristotle's God into an efficient as well as final cause of the world to harmonize with Biblical teaching, none the less God is primarily intellectual in nature. This guarantees that existence is rational through and through, since God is Being-Itself.

Now let us see what the development of such a concept of God under the influence of philosophy leads to. To those who said of God, 'Why doth he yet find-fault? For who hath resisted his will?' Paul answered in a torrent of devotion, 'Who art thou that replyest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him who formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another to dishonour?' (Romans, 9 : 19-21).

We can respond to this affirmatively as a mythical utterance springing out of the unconscious depths where still dwelt the love and the savagery which were Paul and which had driven him to the killing of Christians in fanatical zeal before he experienced the blinding light and the voice of Christ on the Damascus road. But when the same idea becomes hardened into closely reasoned theological doctrine of the divine predestination to eternal blessedness and eternal damnation (by no means is this the universal belief of traditional theologians but it is representative of many of the greatest) we run headlong into the gravest of contradictions. If we keep our thinking straight, we cannot maintain the fully rational, actively benevolent nature of God and, at the same time, believe in divine conduct which by all the standards, He is said to impose upon man, is brutal in nature. Whence comes the difficulty? From building the mythical utterance into a rational structure of theology without recognizing the incommensurability of the structure of myth and the structure of theology. As myth it strikes a gale into which the great soul — a Paul or an Augustine — turns its uplifted wings for an ascent to the sky. As theology it is cold and heartless.

The Christian Doctrine of Incarnation

But I must pass on to a second and much more distinctive Christian concept — that of the historical and unique incarnation of God

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in Christ. Historical because it happened in historical time rather than 'in illo tempore' of myth; unique, because it occurred once and for all time. What was the origin of that dogma? To me the *New Testament* documents make this perfectly clear. At the execution of Jesus the disciples fled in terror. Deadly fear turned into something worse — disillusioned despair. And then something happened to them which they experienced as a living present relation with Christ. At this point nothing is said of his being divine. In the first Christian sermon it is said '*Jesus of Nazareth*, a *man* approved of *God* among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which *God* did by him in the midst of you . . .' (Acts, 2 : 22, emphasis mine). He is spoken of here as a concrete geographically located individual within the last two months' physical acquaintance of the speaker. His remarkable actions were attributed not to his divine nature but to God.

These facts are the basis of my conviction that the *experience* of Christ precedes and is the foundation for the *dogma* of Christ as the God-Man. Even in the letter to the Ephesians we hear of 'the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory', and of 'the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead . . .' (Ephesians, 1 : 17-20). Nothing is said in this passage of a pre-existent Divine Being who 'was made flesh'. The fullness of the writer's spiritual life breaks out in mythic figures which rapidly became the basis for belief in Christ's divine nature.

The idea of incarnation was nothing new. The novel feature, the most daringly imaginative venture, was to think of it as a permanent alteration in the nature of the Deity. The foundation of this disputed doctrine is in the letter to the Hebrews, where Christ is spoken of as the eternal son by whom God made the worlds. 'For it became him, for whom are all things . . . to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings . . . Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same . . . Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest . . . For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted' (Hebrews, 2 : 10-18).

Space forbids giving an adequate sample of the moving mythic imagery in which this Hebrew author, writing to fellow Hebrews, interprets the Christian faith as the fulfilment of the Hebrew tradition. How are we to characterize the difference between this and the laboured arguments and controversies of the theologians in succeeding centuries? It would appear that the first generation of Christians were in the grasp not of a creed but of a Reality. Their relation to Reality, that is to say, was not cognitive but existential. The heat of their spiritual existence spontaneously laid hold of the wealth of mythic elements which express the depths of the soul and fused these into new and distinct patterns. What mattered if the patterns did not coincide? So long as we stay within the circle of myth, the demand for uniformity does not exist. The creations of art have their very genius in being unique formulations of experience which is universal. The surge of myth is *from* the psychic depths *outward* in the forms of imagery.

How different is the philosophic enterprise! Here the basic stuff is at one remove from the lived existential relation with Being. The basic materials of philosophy are the ideas which the intellect has forged in the drive toward understanding. That necessarily means argument, and all too soon the original lived experience, out of which both mythic images and intellectual concepts sprang, unobtrusively becomes secondary. In place of worshipping the true God comes the idolatrous worship of Truth. Idolatrous because it is not the existential Truth which consists in a right relation of one's personal existence to Being and which is identical with the *Way* and with *Life*, but cognitive truth which is the property of correct statements *about* Being. And there

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is a fatal difference in their attainability. When the time is ripe, whether thousands of years ago or today, one may find himself plunged into the ocean of existential Truth, while the goal of cognitive truth proves at best to be an ideal which can only be endlessly approximated, and at worst an impossible ideal because of the incommensurability of the cognitive intellect and reality in its depths.

Elsewhere (*Vedanta Kesari*, August, 1963) I have agreed with the view that mythical religion and philosophical faith are compatible and mutually reinforcing. What I have written above does not contradict this. What I have done is to explore the hypothesis that the spontaneous, lofty insights expressed in the rich imagery of one concrete religion — the one to which I adhere — are incommensurate with theological doctrines formulated in philosophical categories. When they are thus treated, the imaginative presentation of man's psychic depths as he confronts the cosmos cools into the materials of theological debate. Natural theology (the pursuit of a knowledge of the divine through reason and experience) is a valid branch of metaphysics and knows or should know its limitations. It is a philosophical enterprise and as such knows no orthodoxy. Theology based on the myths of a concrete religion is something different. Its limitation is its self-restriction to a particular religion, while the philosophical categories on which it depends are universal in their nature.

I am not a theologian, and I have not done justice to Christian theology. In this paper I could not even begin to suggest the wealth of Christian concepts of God. I have chosen rather to attack a specific built-in tendency toward vitiation which is a contributing factor to the present cry for a 'theology without God'. Only if the whole range of the Divine so richly expressed in myth can be faced by Christian thinkers in fear and trembling as well as with fascination, can Christian insights of God be given new symbolic expressions which will resonate with the depths of present experience.

Symposium

CHRISTOLOGY OF PAUL TILLICH

RUTH REYNA

[Dr. Ruth Reyna, M.A., Ph.D., is Lecturer in Indian Philosophy, Punjab University, Chandigarh and author of *The Concept of Maya from the Vedas to the 20the century* and *The Philosophy of Matter in the Atomic Era*, the two books well received in India and elsewhere. She has also contributed many philosophical articles to learned journals.—*Ed.*]

IN order to understand the meaning of Tillich's Christology and the terminology in which he describes the Christ as the actualization of the New Being in history, we must first examine his concept of the ontological structure of man.

Tillich defines Being as 'the expression of the experience of being over nonbeing'.[1] This presupposes the subject-object structure of being, which in turn presupposes the self-world structure as the basic articulation of being. Being is man encountering the world and this logically and experientially precedes all other structures. That is, man experiences himself as having a world to which he belongs, and it is from the analysis of this polar relationship between man and the world that the basic ontological structure can be understood. In Tillich's words, 'the relation is one of polarity . . . the basic ontological structure

[1] *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, p. 11.

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cannot be derived — it must be accepted'.[2]

Tillich offers two distinct concepts of being — the essential and the existential — and the question of their relation to one another and to being-itself is answered by the polarity of freedom and destiny. But freedom, while indispensable to the very aspect of existence, is not the basis of existence but rather 'freedom in unity with finitude',[3] and this finite freedom is the turning point from being to existence. Freedom in polarity with destiny is the structural element that makes existence possible because it transcends the essential necessity of being without destroying it. It is well to understand, at this point, that in Tillich's terminology 'existence' is the aspect of finitude that is man's predicament as a phenomenological entity; and 'essential being' is that eternality in which he nestles in 'dreaming innocence', and from which he leaps to his finitude and to which he shall return as the 'New Being'.

Freedom and destiny, therefore, have not the popular connotations for Tillich. Freedom, as a necessary pole for the actualization of the existential being, Tillich holds, is not the freedom of function such as that of the 'will', but of man, of that being who is not a 'thing' which may or may not exist, but a 'unity of being' which becomes a complete self, a rational person upon its actualization from the state of essential being where it had lain in the Ground of Being as mere potentiality. 'One should speak of the freedom of man,' he explains, 'indicating that every part and every function which constitutes man a personal self, participates in his freedom.'[4] The main emphasis here is that it was freedom in polarity to destiny that enabled man to become an existential being.

Freedom, then, in the Tillich sense, is a prerogative of man alone. It was the freedom to actualize himself into an existential state where he has the freedom to deliberate, decide, and bear responsibility, that effected the transition from essence to existence, a transition apparently foreseen by 'God' as the Ground of Being but which he did not decree.

Since it is man only who has rational self, it is man only who has freedom and in consequence 'destiny'. Tillich defines 'destiny' as 'not a strange power which determines what shall happen to me. It is myself as given, formed by nature, history, and myself. My destiny is the basis of my freedom; my freedom participates in shaping my destiny'; and man, Tillich continues, who has a complete self and world, 'is the only being who is free . . .'.[5]

But this 'destiny' or return to the Ground of Being as the New Being cannot be effected aside and apart from man's experience of finitude. Finitude, for Tillich, is the awareness of nonbeing, and finitude in awareness is anxiety. This very anxiety as the self-awareness of the finite self as finite, presses finitude from inside and reveals to the self its ontological structure. It makes the self aware of his 'disrupted existence', or in the theological sense, his 'estrangement' from that of the essential being and gives him the 'courage to be'. That is, this awareness of his estrangement from the Ground of Being, enables the self (man) to transcend the anxiety of doubt and meaninglessness and gives him the courage to look to his return to the Ground of Being, which Tillich holds to be 'the God above God of theism which has disappeared in the abyss of meaninglessness with every other value-meaning'.[6]

In the second volume of his *Systematic Theology* Tillich deals expressly with ontology in its theological application. The 'System' progresses circularly in the leap from man's essential to his existential nature, through what Tillich terms the 'estrangement of existence' and man's return as the 'New Being' from his victory over existence to the Ground of Being in full consciousness; this triumphant 'return' having been effected by way of self-illumination to be found in the revelation of Christology.

[2] *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, p. 174.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 171.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 183.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 196.
[6] *Courage to Be*, p. 187.

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It is significant that in his radical deviation from the traditional, Tillich refers to the biblical story of Adam's Fall as the 'myth of the Fall', and cautions that theology must not take biblical literalism too seriously. He says, in fact, 'Biblical literalism did a distinct disservice to Christianity in its identification of the Christian emphasis on the symbol of the "Fall" with the literalistic interpretation of the Genesis story'.[7]

In order to sharpen the understanding of the phrase 'transition from essence to existence', Tillich says, 'theology must clearly and unambiguously represent "the Fall" as a symbol for the human situation *universally* and not as the story of an event that happened "once upon a time"'.[8] Adam (mythologically speaking) is representative of the total selves in the mystic and primordial unity with the Ground of Being, and who before the 'Fall' was in an essential, though untested and undecided, unity with God.[9] Adam must be understood as essential man and as symbolizing the transition from essence to existence. The essential being — the non-actualized potentiality drives beyond itself, and the possibility of the transition to existence is experienced as 'temptation'. Temptation is unavoidable because the state of dreaming innocence is uncontested and undecided — it is not perfection.

'The Temptation' in the Tillich sense was not an alternative between 'obedience' and 'disobedience'. It was not a choice for or against an edict; it was a compulsion for man. 'Man as a cosmic self,' Tillich explains, 'was caught between the desire to actualize his freedom and the demand to preserve his dreaming innocence. In the power of his finite freedom he decided for actualization.'[10] This Constitutes the 'Fall' for Tillich. It is the turning away from God, the Ground of Being. It is the deliberate act of the cosmic self projecting itself into a state of estrangement (the existential state) from the Ground of Being, from other beings (subjectivity), and from himself (his essential being). The 'Fall' it would seem, was an unavoidable cosmic event, without which man could not have hoped to return to a greater destiny, that of the *conscious* union of existence and essence.

Tillich sees in the myth of the 'Fall', the dynamic trend of nature and the universal application of its dimensions, 'but it is only through man that transition from essence to existence can occur';[11] for it is only man who begins in the Ground of Being as a knowing self, who makes the decision to actualize this self, to build a world in estranged and finite freedom. It is only through the self-illumination to be found in the dynamic revelation of historical events, especially that of Christology, that the estrangement can be overcome and reunion in the Ground of Being effected. Thus in the end, as in the beginning, it is 'separation' that is wrong with life, and *reunion* is the culmination, the reunion of the separated elements of existence within the totality of the New Being.

It would seem, at this point, that we should examine briefly Tillich's position regarding the historic Christ and his definition of 'God'.

'God' in the traditional sense, he says, is purely an objective being, and as such is finite. 'God' is the name for that which concerns man ultimately, and since man's concern is prior, this 'God' results from the tension in human experience.[12] 'God', therefore, does not exist.[13] However, God as the Ground of Being, the God above 'God' is pure being, and as such 'implies an unconditional element which transcends subjectivity and objectivity, that is, a point of identity which makes the idea of truth possible.[14] But when this unconditional element is understood as a highest being called 'God', then it cannot be implied in the idea of truth, and any adoration of an anthropomorphic Being is for

[7] *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, p. 29.
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, p. 206.
[10] *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, p. 35.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 39.
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 211.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 205.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 207.

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Tillich, idolatry. So it is, from this attributeless Ground of Being, that Tillich steps off into his circular ontology — the beginning, the Fall, the illumination, the New Being, and the destiny of man — re-union.

The greater meaning in the 'incarnation' which symbolically for Tillich means the actualization of man together with his eternal relationship to God, lies in overcoming the contradiction between essential manhood and existential manhood. 'The Christ,' he asserts, 'represents any man and all men in their actualization to the finite in which they retain a portion of their original essence. It is in him that God is made flesh in every man.' Tillich points out that 'historical doubt concerning the existence and life of someone with the name "Jesus of Nazareth" cannot be overruled . . . whatever his name, the New Being was and is actual in this man . . . the New Being has conquered the old being, but it does not guarantee his name to be Jesus of Nazareth'.[15] However, the historical fact of men *proclaiming* a certain man (Jesus of Nazareth) to be 'the Christ' is individual and symbolic.

The symbolic temptation of the symbolic Christ in which Jesus rejects Satan, is the initial step for all men in the attainment of self-illumination or self-knowledge; for it is this act of declining the world that is the first step toward decentralization of the self, and through which we come to realize that it is of negative consequence to our destiny to have the objects of desires (however justified) without God. 'Jesus could have had them but it would have meant surrendering his messianic quality.'[16] We must make this same decision, Tillich tells us, not *alongside* the unity with God, but *within* it, if we are to realize our destiny — that of victory over existential estrangement.

The New Being is actualized in 'the Crucified who cried to God who remained his God after the God of confidence had left him in the darkness of doubt and meaninglessness'.[17] The New Being reunites the separated elements of existence with their essence, with the totality of being. The New Being is the participation of being itself in existence, and as such is the creative and transforming power. In the New Being lies our confidence that the essential and existential in us are already reconciled. The New Being is the power of healing, the power that makes us whole again. And for Tillich, this concept means that history is in its essence the history of salvation — the continuous transforming action of the New Being. Tillich makes this statement, 'My Christology and dogmatics are determined by the interpretation of the cross of Christ as the event of history in which divine judgment over the world becomes concrete and manifest'.[18] This is the appearance of the Christ, the New Being, bringing both crisis and renewal.

'The "Cross of Christ" is the Cross of one [any man] who has subjected himself to the death of existential estrangement . . . otherwise,' states Tillich, 'it would only be one more tragic event (which it also is) in the long history of the tragedy of man.'[19] And the resurrection of the Christ, he contends, is the Resurrection of the one [again, any man] who has subjected himself to the death of existential estrangement; 'it is the certainty of one's victory over the death of estrangement which creates the certainty of the Resurrection of the Christ as event and symbol, and it is not historical conviction or the acceptance of Biblical authority which creates this certainty'.[20]

Summary

Man realizes his finitude as he is drawn in anxiety between the *a priori* knowledge of his essential being and the awfulness of the possibility of his nonbeing; but the balancing rod toward hope is that, included in the awareness

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 114.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 129.
[17] *Courage to Be*, p. 188.
[18] *The Interpretation of History* (New York, 1936), p. 32.
[19] *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, p. 153.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 155.

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of his finitude is the awareness of his potential infinity. This awareness of potential infinity is in reality a relation that gives way to a knowledge of eternality. Man, realizing his position of estrangement from the Ground of Being, struggles ever for reunification with his Ground of Being (a God without attributes) and with his own essential being from which he also estranged himself in his free act of actualization.

Along with his awareness of potential infinity man has the symbolism of Christology to direct him to the proper self-knowledge, an illumination through revelation that will direct him in his victorious struggle to conquer his existential predicament. The Christ, symbolized as the New Being, who surrendered his finitude without losing himself, points the way to the transcending of the 'awful abyss of meaninglessness', and offers the hope of man's ultimate participation in true being. The content of absolute faith, for Tillich, is the 'God above God' — the God who appears when God has disappeared in the anxiety of doubt.

Symposium

ŚAKTI WORSHIP IN THE SOUTH

'ANNA'

[Sri 'Anna' is a pen name of Sri N. Subramania Aiyar, a former Headmaster of the Ramakrishna Mission Boys' High School, Madras. He is now the Secretary, Vivekananda College, Madras and a 'Devi Upāsaka'. So this article of his as it comes from a practicant himself will be helpful to understand the form of worship and the concept of God as Mother, in the South. Sri 'Anna' has also to his credit translations of many scriptural texts into Tamil.—*Ed.*]

I

ŚĀKTA LITERATURE

THE origin of Śakti worship can be traced to such Vedic texts as Śri Sūktam, Durgā Sūktam, Bhū Sūktam, *Bahvṛchopaniṣad, Tripuronisad, Bhāvanopaniṣad* and other Devi Upaniṣads. In Sandhyā Upāsana, we think of Gayatri Devi in the solar orb and imagine that the sun shines by Her effulgence and that She is also the Truth which has kindled the light of reason in our minds. Her praise is sung thus in the Mantra, *Āyātu Varadā Devī*: 'To those who adore Thee, O Mother, Thou grantest all boons. Thou art the origin of the Vedas and of all the worlds. Be pleased to shine in my heart and accept my adoration. Thou art intelligence, thou art the power of endurance, Thou art strength, Thou art effulgence, Thou art the light of the Devas and Thou art in everything and beyond everything. Bathe me in Thy light and purify me'. A little reflection will thus show that the daily Sandhyāvandana enjoined by the Vedas is primarily Śakti worship.

In the *Mahābhārata,* there is reference to Śakti worship in many contexts. Before entering the Matsya kingdom for spending the last year of exile incognito, Dharmaputra prays to Durga.[1] At the commencement of the battle of Kurukshetra Sri Krishna asks Arjuna to climb down from the chariot and to pray to Durga and Arjuna does so.[2]

In most of the Purāṇas, the importance of Śakti worship is alluded to. In the *Srimad Bhāgavata,* we see Rukmini worshipping at the

[1] अस्तुवन्मनसा देवीं दुर्गां त्रिभुवनेश्वरीम्। यशोदागर्भसम्भूतां नारायणवरप्रियाम्॥—*M.B.*, IV. 8.1-26.

[2] नमस्ते सिद्धसेनानि आर्ये मन्दारवासिनि। कुमारि कालि कापालि कपिले कृष्णपिंगले।...स्तुतासि त्वं महादेवि विशुद्धेनान्तरात्मना। जयो भवतु मे नित्यं त्वत्प्रसादाद्रणाजिरे॥—*M.B.*, VI. 23.4-13.

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shrine of Ambika before her marriage.[3] The *Devi Bhāgavatam* deals entirely with the glory of the Divine Mother. The *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* contains Lalita Ṣahasranāma and Triśati with detailed instructions regarding modes of Devi worship. Chandi or Devi Mahātmyam forms part of *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*. Then we have the vast literature consisting of Āgama, Rahasya, Samhita, Yamala, Ārnava and Tantra with their numerous commentaries which codify the methods of Śakti worship and explain its philosophy. Referring to the Śākta Tantras which are sixty four in number, the *Soundarya-lahari* says that after Śiva had filled the world with the other Tantras, He gave out at the request of Devi the Śri Tantra which fulfils the objects covered by all the other Tantras and this is known as the worship of Śripura or Śri Vidyā.[4]

We are told that Dattātreya, seeing that the Upāsana of Tripura is considered the highest of all forms of worship and that its effects included the benefits of the other modes, composed the Datta Samhita, comprising 18,000 verses in which the worship of Tripura is laid down in all its details. From him, Paraśurama learnt the Samhita and abridged it in 6,000 *sūtras*. His pupil, Sumedha, made an abridgement of the Samhita and the *sūtras* in the form of a dialogue between Datta and Rama. It is this abridgement that is known as Paraśurama Kalpa Sutra. Śakti worship in the South is mainly on the lines laid down therein. Umānandanātha, a disciple of Bhāskararāya composed in 1775, the *Nityotsava*, clarifying the methods of worship according to the Sūtra. A later scholar, Rameśwara Sāstri, a disciple of a disciple of Bhāskararāya wrote a succinct gloss of the Sutra by name '*Sowbhāgya Śuddhodaya*'. Bhāskararāya himself in his book called '*Setu bandha*', which is a commentary on *Nitya Ṣoḍaṣika Ārṇava* of Vāmakeśwara Tantra and also in his *Lalitā Sahasranāma Bhāṣya* and *Varivāsya Rahasya* has expounded the methods and philosophy of Śakti worship. These three works of Bhāskararāya are considered the Prasthana Traya of Śri Vidyā.

The worship of Devi in Śri Chakra is set forth by Ādi Śankara in his *Prapanchasāra* and *Soundaryalahari* and this form of worship occupies a high place in the traditions of the Maths organized by him. In Tamil, we have expositions of Śakti Mantras and Upāsanas in 'Tirumantram' of Tirumoola Nayanar and in later day works like 'Abhirami Anthadi'. The works of Arthur Avalon in English have thrown a flood of light on Śākta philosophy and practice, and removed many misconceptions which prevailed previously. The writings of Śri Aurobindo and his followers have also contributed to a better understanding of the subject in the South. Kāvyaganta Ganapati Sastri, a disciple of Sri Ramana Maharshi has written a book of Sutras called 'Daśa Mahā Vidyā'. The Guhānanda Maṇḍali in Madras under the guidance of Chidānandanātha Sri N. Subramania Aiyar has done pioneering work in recent years in removing the cobwebs that had gathered round the Śākta Cult and in popularizing it in its pure form.

II

Places of Śakti Worship

Numerous are the places of Śakti worship in the South and among them we may refer to a few. At Kanya Kumari, the southern extremity of Bhārata Varsha, Śakti is worshipped as Bālā. The writer of 'Tholkappiam', when describing the Tamil country as bounded on the north by Venkatam and south by Kumari was probably suggesting that these two frontiers were guarded by two *kumāris* (Bālā). At Madurai, Śakti is worshipped as Meenākshi, Mantriṇi or Shyāmala; at Jambukeśwaram, as Akhilāṇḍeś-

[3] भवानीं वन्दयांचक्रुर्भवपत्नीं भवान्विताम् । नमस्ये त्वाम्बिकेऽभीक्ष्णं स्वसन्तानयुतां शिवाम् । भूयात् पतिर्मे भगवान् कृष्णस्तदनुमोदताम् ॥...
— *Bhagavata* X. 54.45-49.

[4] चतुः षष्ट्या तन्त्रैः सकलमतिसन्धाय भुवनं स्थितस्तत्तत् सिद्धि-प्रसव-परतन्त्रैः पशुपतिः । पुनस्त्वन्निर्बन्धादखिल-पुरुषार्थैक-घटना-स्वतन्त्रं ते तन्त्रं क्षितितलमवातीतरदिदम् ॥
— *Soundaryalahari*, 31.

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wari or Dandini and at Kancheepuram as Kāmākshi or Mahā-Tripurasundari. She is worshipped as Sāradā at Sringeri, as Chāmundeśwari in Mysore and as Bhagavati in Kerala. On the outskirts of each town and village in South India, She is worshipped as Bhadrakāli in unpretentious temples and She is the guardian deity or Ellayamman, animal sacrifice being permitted in these temples. She is worshipped as Durga-Lakshmi-Saraswati, three in one, generally during Navaratri, in every household. In whatever form She is worshipped, She is One, the Mahā Māyā or Parabrahma Mahishī. Śankarāchārya says in *Soundaryalahari* : 'O Parabrahmamahishī! The knowers of Veda call you Vāk-Devatā the consort of Brahma, Lakshmi the consort of Vishnu, Parvati the consort of Śiva. Who are You the fourth (Turiya) possessing immeasurable glory and beyond the reach of all, revolving the worlds, called Mahāmāyā?'[5]

III

Modes of Worship

While in general the northern modes of worship incline to Vāmāchārā and emphasize strength and passion and are revolutionary, the Southern modes incline to Dakshiṇāchāra and emphasize beauty and grace and are evolutionary, cautious and slow. The two are not contradictory, but complementary. Pointing to the tepid gore that flowed from the decapitated trunks of goats at the Kāli Temple of Kalighat, Calcutta, a Western lady disciple asked Swami Vivekananda, 'Well, Swami, why so much blood?' The Swamiji gravely replied : 'Is not a little blood necessary to complete the picture?'

Even in the worship of Śri Krishna, we can trace these two approaches. Krishna is not merely 'Venugopala' or 'Gopijana Vallabha' with a flute on his lips and a garland on his neck but is also a *kāla-kāla*. In his Viśwarūpa, Arjuna sees his terrible form. The Lord does not say, 'I will not send you misfortunes' but He says that He would give the strength to bear them when they come. In fact, He seems to have reserved the greatest trials to His dearest devotees. The hero can face the world with all its terror and hideousness and not curse God for it. He looks upon the sweet smile as well as the dark frown of nature as the manifestations of the same divinity. God is not only the Lord of creation but also the Lord of destruction. His divine hand is everywhere : in birth as well as in death, in health as well as in disease, in peace as well as in warfare, in the liquid beauty of the full moon as well as in the pitchy darkness of a cold wintry night. The sweet smile as well as the angry frown, both belong to the same God. It is therefore said in the Devī Mahātmyam, 'She is Goddess Lakshmi reigning in the house of the fortunate and She is again the ill-luck in the house of the sinner. She is the intelligence of the wise, the *shraddhā* of the pious and the modesty of the virtuous woman'.[6]

In the Southern cult of Śri Vidyā the Divine Mother is mostly worshipped in Her aspect as Lalitā Mahā-Tripurasundari. The Devi is to be meditated upon as of a ruddy complexion, with eyes expansive as an ocean overflowing with waves of grace, with a noose, a goad, arrows of flowers and a bow of sugarcane in Her hands, surrounded by Aṇima and other deities and ultimately as one's own Self. The process of worship consists of Bhūta Śuddhi, several kinds of Nyāsa, Prāṇapratiṣṭha, *japa*, Mānasapūja, Āvaraṇapūja, Arcana, Dhūpa, Dipārādhana, Naivedya, Neerāja, Stotra, Kāmakalādhyāna, Homa, Balidāna, Suvāsinīpūja, Sāmayikapūja and Tatwasādhana. The worship is done in the image of the Devi as well as in the Śri Chakra or Śri Yantra.

[5] गिरामाहुर्देवीं द्रुहिणगृहिणीमागमविदो
हरेः पत्नीं पद्मां हरसहचरीमद्रितनयाम् ।
तुरीया कापि त्वं दुरधिगमनिस्सीममहिमा
महामाया विश्वं भ्रमयसि परब्रह्म-महिषि ॥

[6] या श्रीः स्वयं सुकृतिनां भवनेष्वलक्ष्मीः
पापात्मनां कृतधियां हृदयेषु बुद्धिः ।
श्रद्धा सतां कुलजनप्रभवस्यलज्जा
तां त्वां नताः स्म परिपालय देवि विश्वम् ।
— *Devi Mahatmyam*, 4.5.

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Mantra, Yantra and Tantra form the three corners of the triangle of Śri Vidyā. Mantra is visualized in the Yantra. The worship of the Yantra, internal and external and the practice of Kuṇḍalini yoga and other *sādhanas* constitute the Tantra or *modus operandi*. The chief Mantra of Śri Vidyā is Panchadaśākṣari and the chief Tantra is the meditation on the identity of Mantra, Yantra and Tantra with the Devi Herself. If Śakti worship is done with understanding and appreciation and with love in the heart, then Mantra, Yantra, offerings, the procedure and paraphernalia of Puja are all transformed into forms and expressions of Chit Śakti. The object is to effect the transformation of the materials and acts of ordinary experience into forms revealing the play, the power and the bliss of the Divine Mother. The *Soundaryalahari* says that if the worshipper practices Ātmārpanam, ordinary talk is converted into Japam, normal work with the hand becomes Mudra, walking becomes Pradakshina, eating becomes Homa, lying down Praṇāma and in fact whatever action is naturally done is transformed into worship.[7]

The Śri Vidyā Upāsaka should follow certain disciplines. He should not find fault with other paths or criticize them while being steadfast in his own. The practice of *japam* should go on as an under-current at all times. He should not ask for favours or accept them. He should do his duties in the world and the worship of the deity without attachment to fruits. He should be fearless. He should not acquire wealth and possessions with the motive of selfish enjoyment and he should consider nothing higher than the realization of the Self.[8]

Śakti worship properly understood is a synthesis and harmony in which diverse and sometimes conflicting tendencies of human endeavour have been accommodated and each in union with the rest has been assured its fullest development and satisfaction. An adept in Śri Vidyā can be a Śākta at heart, a Śaivite in outlook and a Vaishnavite in practice.[9] That such a reconciliation is not only possible but necessary was revealed to us in Śri Ramakrishna, the Avatar of the age. He has proved that all paths pursued with devotion lead to the one God, that Mantras are efficacious, that Yantras are potent, that Devatās and higher powers exist, that Siddhis do come and that step by step the Divine Mother leads the *sādhaka* to higher and higher levels of perfection till he reaches the goal.

IV

Philosophy of Worship

Śri Ramakrishna says: 'That which is Brahman is also Kāli, the Mother, the Primal Energy. When inactive, It is called Brahman. Again, when creating, preserving, and destroying, It is called Śakti. Still water is an illustration of Brahman. The same water, moving in waves, may be compared to Śakti, Kāli. What is the meaning of Kāli? She who communes with Mahā-Kāla, the Absolute, is Kāli. She is formless and, again, She has forms. If you believe in the formless aspect, then meditate on Kāli as that. If you meditate on any aspect of Hers with firm conviction, She will let you know Her true nature. Then you will realize that not merely does God exist, but He will come near you and talk to you, as I am talking to you. Have faith and you will achieve everything'.[10]

The ultimate Reality is Sat-Chit-Ananda, Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. Man is identical with this Reality but under the influence of Māyā, or illusion, he has forgotten his true

[7] जपो जल्पः शिल्पं सकलमपि मुद्राविरचना
गतिः प्रादक्षिण्यक्रमणमशनाद्याहुति विधिः ।
प्रणामः संवेशः सुखमखिलमात्मार्पणदृशा
सपर्या पर्यायस्तव भवतु यन्मे विलसितम् ॥
—*Soundaryalahari*, 27.

[8] सर्वदर्शनानिन्दा । सदा विद्यानुसंहति । सर्वत्र निष्परिग्रहता । फलंत्यक्त्वा कर्मकरणम् । निर्भयता सर्वत्र । आत्मलाभान्न परं विद्यते ॥
—*Parasurama Kalpa Sutras*.

[9] अन्तः शाक्तो बहिः शैवो व्यवहारेषु वैष्णवः

[10] *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (1942 Edition) p. 634.

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nature. He takes to be real a merely apparent world of subject and object, and this error is the cause of his bondage and suffering. The goal of all spiritual practice is the re-discovery of his true identity with the Reality. For the achievement of this goal, Vedanta prescribes an austere method of discrimination and renunciation. The way is, 'Neti, Neti', to negate the Asat or unreal *upādhis*. If the *upādhis* are eliminated through service to a Guru and proper enquiry, one realizes the identity of the Jīvātman and Paramātman. But this is not so easily done. Śri Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita, 'the difficulty of those whose thoughts are set on the unmanifested is greater, for the goal of the unmanifested Brahman is hard to reach by embodied beings (who are attached to their bodies)'.[11] Sri Ramakrishna says, 'It is God Himself who makes us feel this difference, and on account of this difference, one sees man and woman, light and darkness, and so on. As long as one is aware of this difference, one must accept Śakti, the Personal God. It is God who has put "I-consciousness" in us. You may reason a thousand times; still this "I" does not disappear. Therefore, as long as a man is conscious of "I" and of differentiation, he cannot speak of the attributeless Brahman and must accept Brahman with attributes. This Brahman with attributes has been declared in the Vedas, the Puranas, and the Tantra, to be Kāli, the Primal Energy.'[12] This is the justification for combining philosophy with rituals and meditation with ceremonies. Whereas the Vedantic method of enquiry is one of rejection and elimination, the Tāntric method is one of acceptance and sublimation. Śakti worship is a means of elevation of the consciousness, using even base materials as help, following the lead of one who has tried the experiment before and succeeded. The very poison that kills is transmuted into the elixir of life.[13] In the process of worship, the order in which the Tattwas are evolved are reversed. From the gross, one proceeds to the subtle, from the outer Bhūpura of the Śri Chakra to the Bindu, the central point. By this practice one is enabled to awaken the Kuṇḍalini Śakti lying coiled in the Mūlādhāra, at the base of the spinal column. Kuṇḍalini is a universal principle. Having evolved the complex apparatus of every object, Kuṇḍalini coils herself up at the centre of the apparatus and remains as the static, nuclear basis and also as its magazine of power to draw and fall back upon. One must help oneself by drawing from this power to become free from the bonds under which one groans. Even if one does not consciously or deliberately set oneself to the task of rousing the Kuṇḍalini, She will be roused by the power of Śakti or Jñāna and by the disciplines of the Upāsana one practises, if one follows them with faith. This was demonstrated in the life of Śri Ramakrishna. He actually saw the Power ascending along the Sushumna canal and the six centres to the thousand-petalled lotus at the top of the head. This phenomenon was accompanied by visions, and trances. Later on, he described to his disciples and devotees the various movements of the Kuṇḍalini: the fishlike, birdlike, monkey-like, and so on. The awakening of the Kuṇḍalini is the beginning of spiritual consciousness and its union with the Supreme Spirit in the Sahasrāra is the consummation of Śakti worship.

[11] क्लेशोऽधिकरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसां।
अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते॥
—*Gita* 12.5.

[12] *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 636.

[13] यैरेव पतनं द्रव्यैः सिद्धिस्तैरेव चोदिता।

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Symposium

FROM CONCEPTS OF GOD TO SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S EXPERIENCE OF THE GODHEAD

C. T. K. CHARI

[Dr. C. T. K. Chari, M.A., Ph.D., is the Chairman of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology, Madras Christian College, Tambaram, Madras. In this survey of his he indicates that Ramakrishna Vedanta is unique in that it does not make exclusive claims for any particular concept of God or philosophy but permits different schools of thought in its tradition.—*Ed.*]

PERHAPS it is not obvious why a symposium on 'concepts of God' should be as inescapable as it is presumptuous when we discuss the mystical experiences of Bhagavān Sri Ramakrishna. Almost all exponents of Hindu religion are agreed that its standpoint is synoptic and ironical. *Ekam sat, viprā bahudha vadanti* (The real is one, sages call it by various names) cannot be dismissed as the ditty of the ancient Vedic seers. All the great Hindu teachers of recent times, Sri Ramana, Sri Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi, have been anxious to accommodate a plurality of religious approaches. A modern scholar like Toynbee adopts the Symmachan axiom : *Uno itinere non potest pervenire ad tam grande secretum* (The heart of so great a mystery cannot be approached along one road only). What, then, is distinctive about Sri Ramakrishna's insistence on the harmony of different concepts about God? It is no answer to say that he practised the *sādhanas* of widely different religions, various techniques of prayer and meditation and found them 'spiritually equivalent'. A pragmatic 'workability' of all creeds, even at its best, does not ensure any profound convergence and at its worst, may degenerate into an appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober.

I maintain that Sri Ramakrishna reconciled the world's religions not by grading 'concepts of God' (for there can be no unanimity about the 'grading'), but by soaring to those mystical altitudes where concepts must yield to ineffable intuitions. Al-Junayd said : 'Gnosis is of two kinds : the gnosis of self-revelation (*ta'arruf*) and the gnosis of self-instruction (*ta'rīf*).' The meaning of 'self-revelation', according to the Ṣūfīs, is that 'He causes them to know Him and to know all through Him'. Attestation is by gnosis through gnosis. Abū Bakr al-Sabbak said : 'When God created the intellect he said to it, "Who am I?"' It was silent : so he anointed [literally 'smeared with kohl'] it with the light of oneness (*waḥdānīyah*) and it opened its eyes and said : 'Thou art God ; there is no God except Thee'. The intellect has the capacity to know God only through God. Pseudo-Dionysius, the Father of all Western mysticism, declared that God is the Abyss which cannot be sounded. Meister Eckhart knew that there is in the soul a mode into which no images enter ; there is neither understanding nor activity there. It is in the 'middle stillness' that God comes to the soul, without form and without similitudes. Ruysbroeck spoke of the *superessentia nostra,* the Essence beyond all created essences, the *essentia Dei.* Sri Ramakrishna found that all the Vedas, all the scriptures, all the philosophies in the world have become *Ucchishṭa,* defiled like food spat out from mouths, because they have been uttered by human tongues. For the sake of the precious and esoteric pearl (*al durra al Fakhirah*), of which Al-Ghazālī, the 'Witness of Islam' (*Hujjāt al Islam*), spoke we have to sell all our merchandise of learning. For Sri Ramakrishna as for Ghazālī, the 'revival of the religious sciences' (*Iḥyā 'Ulūm al-Dīn*) is often the 'destruction of philosophers' (*Tahafut al falasifah*).

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To appreciate Sri Ramakrishna's unique place among all the modern teachers of India, we must realize that only in his case does the question of philosophic affiliation to a particular *darśana* or system becomes wholly inapt, if not ludicrous. Of Bhagavān Sri Ramaṇa it has been said that he did *not* regard Dvaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Advaita as co-ordinate or co-equal truths. The ultimate truth for him was Advaita; everything else was but an approximation. Did he not deliberately select Advaita works for translation into Tamil? It has been argued again that Sri Aurobindo's 'synthetic view' of the classical systems involves a criticism and at least a partial rejection of classical Advaita and *māyāvāda*. The question has been mooted whether Mahātma Gandhi, the least philosophical of all Indian teachers, was a true Advaitin. Sri Ramakrishna presents a more recalcitrant and more baffling problem. For one thing, he left not a scrap of writing. Judging him from what his loyal disciples have said of him is as hazardous a venture as trying to find out whether the Socrates of Plato or the Socrates of Xenophon was the authentic historic figure. Cicero said of Socrates that he brought philosophy down from the heavens to the earth. Be that as it may, the sage of Athens brought with him no philosophical manuscripts for sale or publication. From the Paramahamsa of Bengal we learn that the *granthas* are, more often than not, *granthis*.

How does Ramakrishna Vedanta reconcile Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita, Dvaita, Śaiva Siddhānta and countless other systems? A favourite answer claiming the authority of Swami Vivekananda says that Dvaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita are rungs on the ladder of spiritual progress. The experience of non-duality is the culmination and fulfilment of all other religious experiences. Swami Prabhavananda, in his *The Spiritual Heritage of India* (George Allen & Unwin, London, 1962, p. 347), interprets dualism, qualified monism and non-dualism not as mutually exclusive and contrary points of view, but as successive stages in the religious quest. President S. Radhakrishnan has propounded a subtle 'perspectivism' along these lines. Not a bumptious irreverence for these dedicated writers and senior monks of the Sri Ramakrishna Order but a profound obeisance to the Paramahamsa leads me to question the very popular view. Our little theories have their day and cease to be. The Master's stature will never be completely understood.

A penetrating article by Swami Siddheswarananda, accompanied by a thoughtful Editorial note, in The *Vedanta Kesari* for January 1955 (Vol. XLI, No. 9), makes us aware that, even in the Sri Ramakrishna Order, there are different traditions about the Great Master, traditions which are not always written or spoken. Swami Saradananda, in his *Sri Ramakrishna Lila Prasanga* (Eng. tr., 2nd and revised edition, pp. 89-90, 140, 201, 251), unfolded the progressive view of Sri Ramakrishna's manifold experiences of the Divine. According to this interpretation, the Master's religious experience underwent a progressive enrichment beginning with the experience of the Divine Mother's Ocean of Light at the age of nineteen and culminating in the Advaitic realization prompted by Totapuri. Swami Nikhilananda, in his article in *The Vedanta Kesari* for March, 1955, subscribes to this view when he writes: 'Having experienced the entire gamut of dualistic visions, he (Sri Ramakrishna) became eager to realize the Impersonal God according to non-dualistic Vedanta'. When the Image of the Divine Mother was pierced by the 'sword of non-dualism', the last barrier vanished, and 'he experienced in *nirvikalpa samādhi* complete identity with the Brahman'. In Swami Siddheswarananda's article, and in the Editorial Note accompanying it, there is mention of another interpretation of Sri Ramakrishna's experiences, an interpretation said to be inspired by no less a person than Swami Ramakrishnananda, the Founder and First President of Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras. According to this second interpretation, the Bhagavān's youthful experience of the Divine Mother as an Ocean of Light was not a 'foretaste' of higher experiences to come but the 'very fund and centre of all experiences'. 'All that he realized afterwards, he recognized

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as his Mother.' I have heard my teacher, the late Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari who knew Swami Ramakrishnananda personally, mention this unwritten tradition about the Paramahamsa. That Sarat and Sashi, two direct disciples of the Bhagavān should view him from two startlingly different angles is enough to curb our misplaced enthusiasm for the rival tabernacles of academic philosophy. The Editorial note in *The Vedanta Kesari* for January 1955 pronounced with fine balance: 'The very nature of the Ramakrishna tradition is to permit different schools of thought and not to condemn all other opinions except one's own based on a particular fanatical *siddhānta*. It is *Samanvaya*, synthesis, that Sri Ramakrishna preached and his devotees will not monopolize truth and deny access to others who differ from them'.

Swami Siddheswarananda, in his stimulating article, reminds us that Sri Ramakrishna claimed that his experiences were 'beyond all Vedas and Vedanta'. Why should we not take the Master's statement literally? No strict chronological or logical sequence of *yoga samādhi* and *bhāva mukha* in the Master's life can be established on the basis of the available records. Swami Siddeswarananda's tentatively formulated opinion that the state of remaining in *Bhāva mukha* may be higher than even *jivanmukti* is not the heresy it sounds. As he points out, *bhāva mukha* with all the overtones it carried in the Master's life is not part and parcel of some generally accepted Vedantic vocabulary. If a conventional Advaitic standpoint was the ultimate truth for the Bhagavān, why was Totapuri, an ardent Advaitin, rebuked and chastened by the Divine Mother?

The late Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari characterized Sri Ramakrishna's religion as a 'mystic' or 'intuitive' Advaita (*Anubhavādvaita*). He found in it the 'triadic' movement of Śaktism, *Acintya Bhedābheda* (Bengal *Vaiṣnavism*) and Advaita. The professor was persuaded that an epoch-making chapter in the history of comparative Vedanta was enacted when Sri Ramakrishna flouted alike the theistic fanaticism of the Bhairavi Brahmani and the monistic intolerance of Totapuri. Nalini Devadas, in a discerning little book (*Sri Ramakrishna*. The Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, Bangalore, 1966), notes that, in *bhāva mukha*, the relation between the pervader and the pervaded is "inconceivable difference in non-difference" (*acintya bhedābheda*). In an article in *The Vedanta Kesari* for September 1955, Prof. Srinivasachari said: 'Sri Ramakrishna is the embodiment of the synoptic method His whole life is a criticism of *Siddhāntic* intolerance'.

Unfortunately our troubles about '*siddhāntic* intolerance' do not end here. Just *what* is the 'synthetic view' of Vedanta? Have we an intellectual or conceptual grasp of it? Prof. Srinivasachari explained that '*Siddhānta* follows the disjunctive symbol "either-or" and establishes truth by repudiating false views called *pūrvapakṣa* It aims at the exclusive view of truth and . . . leads to dogmatism and intolerance'. What is the remedy for '*Siddhāntic* dogmatism' if, as Prof. Srinivasachari admitted, 'logical consistency', 'rigour', 'coherence', must be respected by spiritual seekers? How does 'Synthetic Vedanta' bypass the rigorously formulated disjunctive 'Either-Or'? How can we 'assimilate' the 'essential' features of an *ultimate* dualism and an *ultimate* non-dualism? Are they not radically incompatible? Prof. Srinivasachari was forced to convert 'Pure Advaita' into a 'Practical Advaita' before it could be made to yield dividends. This is to lapse into a dubious perspectivism. In an article contributed to the Souvenir released on the occasion of the Thirty-eighth Session of the Indian Philosophical Congress which met in Madras in December, 1964, Prof. P. Sankaranarayanan, formerly of the Vivekananda College, remarked that Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari's tireless groping after 'synthesis' led to the jocular estimate of him as 'neither an honest Advaitin nor an earnest Viśiṣṭādvaitin'. It seems to me the merest futility to suppose that, if the intellect cannot achieve a 'harmony of systems' by its own unaided efforts, it can at least learn to duplicate the feat once it is a fait accompli for a Sri Ramakrishna. Any

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and every intellectual synthesis ends by proclaiming one *darśana* as ultimate and all others as approximations.

Very profound logical exercises are perhaps needed if logic is to be overcome. Kierkegaard said that the greatness of the human intellect lies precisely in its capacity to realize that it is *not great*. Sri Aurobindo's 'logic of the Infinite' has been expounded by saying that, in the Infinite, every affirmation is self-contained, not based explicitly or implicitly on denial. Thus we hear that "God is not not-A" is not at all implied by 'God is A'. The experience of God as 'personal', on the one hand, and as 'impersonal', on the other, are not logical contraries. Each experience is a genuine self-disclosure of the Infinite, but not more than one of its 'poises'. We are told that the traditional *āchāryas* erred by not sufficiently recognizing the 'indeterminable nature of the Infinite'. An Advaitic turn to the whole argument has been given by others who claim that 'negation *ought* to disappear in the Absolute' because only negation breeds differences and relations at the phenomenal level. Shall we defend Ramakrishna Vedanta along these sophisticated lines?

I am afraid that the mere assertion that the traditional laws of exclusion, disjunction and negation have been overcome, sheds no light on the classical laws of logic. By using the tools of modern logic, we can show that negation $\backsim$ is a more primitive and resistant logical constant than others. The conjunctive, disjunctive and implicative forms represented by $p.q$, $p \vee q$, and $p \supset q$ can be exhibited as combinations of negation and one other constant. Thus

$$\text{(i)} \quad p \vee q = \sim(\sim p.\sim q)\ Df.$$
$$\text{(ii)} \quad p.q = \sim(\sim p \vee \sim q)\ Df.$$
$$\text{(iii)} \quad p \supset q = \sim(p.\sim q)\ Df.$$

We can extend De Morgan's theorems to the case

$$\sim[p.q.(r \supset s)] \equiv [\sim p \vee \sim q \vee \sim(r \supset s)].$$

As is well known, our primitive logical constant can be the Sheffer stroke, at least one of two, p, q is *false*, p/q.

Thus

$$\text{(iv)} \quad p \cdot q = \sim(p/q)\ Df.$$
$$\text{(v)} \quad p \supset q = p/\sim q\ Df.$$

In the May 1965 issue of *The Vedanta Kesari*, I have suggested that modern non-classical logics like Brouwerian mathematics and multi-valued calculi at least suggest a progressive emancipation from all laws of ordinary affirmation and ordinary negation. In Brouwerian mathematics, the classical 'Non-not-a implies a, $\neg\neg a \supset a$, is replaced by $\neg a \supset (a \supset b)$. Multi-valued calculi reject the *tertium non-datur* or the law of excluded middle with its hoary Aristotelian ancestry. W. Sellars has pointed out, in the Minnesota Studies in Philosophy of Science (Vol III, 1962, p. 618), that there is no simple connection between the existence of 'undecidable statements' and the matrices of a three-valued logic. Representing the three values, as Sellars does, by the symbols, S, $\backsim S$ and $?S$, the relation $S \vee \backsim S \vee ?S$ in a three-valued logic cannot be naively equated with a two-valued contradiction:

$$?S = \backsim(S \vee \backsim S).$$

The discovery that the choice of truth-values in any system of logic is much more arbitrary than was thought to be in the classical logics of antiquity suggests forcibly that logic itself is not sacrosanct in mysticism. Mysticism is transcendence of logic and not a rejection of logic. A rejection of logic would be logic by a restriction of logic. Hegel rejected the laws of contradiction and excluded middle by replacing them with a new dialectical law of synthesis. Ramakrishna Vedanta transcends the logic of contradiction and excluded middle.

Sri Ramakrishna did not achieve a 'harmony of concepts' by substituting a mutually implicant set of ontological atrributes for logical incommensurables. The self-sufficiency of rival systems, from the mystical standpoint of Ramakrishna Vedanta, is deceptive and

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relative not because there is a 'higher logic' in the Infinite, but because all ordinary laws of entailment, negation and exclusion break down for the mystically experienced attributes of the Infinite. It is the great merit of Prof W. T. Stace's *Mysticism and Philosophy* that it inculcates the lesson that a collapse of logic is not the rehabilitation of logic. According to Kierkegaard, the 'existential thinker' (*den existerende Taenker*) does not 'explode the world with a syllogism'. With the greatest simplicity and yet the utmost profundity, Sri Ramakrishna taught that 'God is formless and God is possessed of form, too. And he is also that which transcends both form and formlessness. He alone knows what all He is'. (*Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna,* Tenth edition, 1965, Saying 871).

ART AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

E. R. MAROZZI

[Mr. E. R. Marozzi, M.A., from Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A., has been in close association with the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement. He has in this paper pointed out the sharp contrasts and minute differences in the results between art practised for art's sake and art as a spiritual step, which will give food for reflection.—*Ed.*]

DISCIPLE : Sir, a civilization is said to be mature only when the art is well developed, and thus man's emotional development and maturity seem to depend on art-education for fulfilment. Further, art is seen to have a sublimating, elevating and integrating effect on the human mind. What power is there in art which can do this?

Teacher : "That is true beauty which doth argue you to be divine and born of heavenly spirit."[1] Art (including music, dance, poetry, drama as well as painting and sculpture) refers essentially to the aesthetic experience and it is this which has the power of sublimating and integrating the mind.

Disciple : How does that happen?

Teacher : John Keats pointed to the answer when he said, "Beauty is truth, truth beauty — that is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."[2] By identifying truth and beauty he has approached the Vedantic formula *Sat-chit-ānanda* — the verbal designation of the ultimate spiritual Reality — where *sat* means absolute truth, *chit* means pure consciousness or knowledge and *ānanda* means pure bliss or joy. These, however, are not three but one and inseparable, and it is this which is enjoyed in the aesthetic experience. Because of its spiritual content it sublimates and elevates the mind, and because of its Oneness it unifies and integrates the mind.

Disciple : Do not other kinds of knowledge do this also?

Teacher : No, only that knowledge gained by intuition can do this. That which is gained by the intellect by means of observation and reasoning, and which is based on differentiation of particulars cannot. Scientific knowledge, however, in its furthest reaches — the inventive level — becomes creative and goes beyond the intellect in a synthesis which is then similar to the aesthetic experience.

The experience of art reaches deeper levels of personality, for it is a unified kind of concentration which aims at ultimate harmonies and therefore Oneness. The aesthetic experience has been defined as the temporary perception of the Oneness which underlies Reality. So art can neither be experienced nor created by the use of the intellect which divides, analyses, discriminates and classifies. Intellectual knowledge can be summed up

[1] Alexander Pope.
[2] John Keats, *Ode On a Grecian Urn.*

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mainly as classification. It is incomplete knowledge and is more gross and outer than the intuitive knowledge and tends to alienate the self from the Self in its operation, being characterized by egoism and agentship. Intuition instead involves the inner and more subtle aspects of the personality and takes place in the causal body (*ānandamaya kosha*). Its operation results in harmony, integration and unity; for its knowledge is complete and whole. "Him (the Self) they see not; for as seen he is incomplete — when breathing he is called the vital force, when speaking voice, when seeing the eye, when hearing the ear, when thinking the mind. He who meditates on one or another of these aspects does not know, for he is incomplete with one or another of these. The Self is to be meditated upon for in it all these become One. The Self is to be known, for through it one knows this." [3]

Disciple: Sir, can you explain more clearly what you mean by intuition, *ānandamaya kosha* and deeper levels of personality?

Teacher: Yes. The Upaniṣads describe the human personality as a Divine Reality — the Self (*ātman*) which is encased, as it were, within five sheaths or coverings called *koshas*. The gross and outermost sheath is the physical body (*annamaya kosha* — consisting of food or matter). More subtle and inner than this is the vital body consisting of the energies which animate the gross body (called *prāṇamaya kosha*). Next is the mental sheath (*manomaya kosha* — consisting of *manas* or mind). Still more subtle and inner than this is the intellectual sheath (*vijñānamaya kosha* — consisting of intelligence). Finally the most subtle and innermost sheath is the bliss body (*ānandamaya kosha* — consisting of bliss). It is this last *kosha* with which we are especially concerned here. The bliss body is said to be composed of love, joy, delight, bliss and Brahman; and it is this aspect of personality which when purified (or in certain lucid moments) functions as intuition. Thus we may say that intuition is the mode of perception of the *ānandamaya kosha* — the innermost recesses of the human personality.

In the waking state the joy of the bliss body is experienced in the fruition of meritorious *karma* and in aesthetic contemplation — in the perception of the beautiful and in the creation of aesthetic objects.

Disciple: If the *ānandamaya kosha* has such characteristics as joy, bliss etc., why is it that we are not aware of it and experiencing its happiness?

Teacher: Ordinarily it is obscured by the *guṇas* of *tamas* and *rajas* due to past *karma* — that is, the sum total of our behaviour in terms of indolence, violence, attachment, aversion, selfish actions etc. When it is purified it becomes free from these and attains the state of *sattva*. Then, not only is it free to experience aesthetic objects and the joy of good *karma*, but there the awareness of the Divine Self and spiritual experiences and ecstasies can also be had. That is to say, (excepting the highest state — the *nirvikalpa samādhi* — which is beyond all bodies and all *guṇas*) spiritual experiences are known by means of the purified *ānandamaya kosha*.

Disciple: Then, are spiritual and aesthetic experiences identical, as they are both intuitive and take place in the *ānandamaya kosha*?

Teacher: No, they are not the same. The one is lower and is a stepping stone or approach to the other. It is true that in lucid moments of artistic contemplation one can get a glimpse of the Reality underlying form but we are led only to the door and not allowed to enter. It is a temporal experience which points to, but does not take us to the ultimate Reality and permanent Bliss. And it does not solve the problems of suffering, misery and mortality in the life of man.

> "Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea,
> But sad mortality o'ersways their power,
> How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,
> Whose action is no stronger than a flower?" [4]

[3] *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, I. 4.7.

[4] William Shakespeare, *Sonnets* 65.

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The destiny of man in terms of *karma* and ignorance remain much the same before and after an aesthetic experience, but not so in spiritual experience where "the knots of the heart are cut asunder, all doubts vanish, and the effects of all *karmas* are destroyed".[5]

Furthermore, while there is a strict interdependence between moral values and spiritual life, the relation between aesthetics and morality is rather a loose one. In Dr Paul Duessen's words, "Here and here alone lies the point of contact between aesthetics and morality. The aim of morality is the negation of personality, that of aesthetic intuition the temporal forgetting of it."[6]

In spiritual life the practice of moral virtues is the *sine qua non* and foundation of it, while on the other hand, a man may be a great and accomplished artist and yet be indifferent to moral values.

Disciple : Yes, I have noticed that artists may lead a loose moral life, assuming the roles called "bohemian" or "beatnik", but why is that?

Teacher : Because it is only a temporal forgetting of the personality, as stated above. The old self is pushed aside for the time being during the aesthetic experience and there is a kind of detachment from practical concerns —a "disinterested delight" (as Kant called it) and the desires and propensities of the senses are held in abeyance. But when the experience is over, the old ego-personality returns and the pendulum swings to the opposite extreme so that desires and sense experiences are intensified and the mind, still unpurified, is unable to control them.

However, in the case of a pure mind the aesthetic experience may be the occasion for a spiritual experience. In the life of Sri Ramakrishna, for instance, the first *samādhi* as a child was inspired by an aesthetic experience of seeing a flock of white cranes in flight against the background of a black storm cloud. And in the history of art also there are instances where the artist was in a state of ecstasy while practising his art — as in the cases of Fra Angelico, and in Buddhist and Hindu art where the artist was required to practise spiritual disciplines before proceeding to create his work. Thus for the pure mind we may say that there is little difference between the aesthetic and spiritual experience, for in all of his perceptions he experiences the spiritual Reality.

Disciple : But the artist must be concerned with form. And as forms are derived from nature, the artist must be depicting what he sees in nature. As such it would be a kind of mechanical skill and technical process only.

Teacher : If that were the case, the photogarphic camera would be the most accomplished artist. It has been a common misunderstanding that art imitates nature. Instead it is more correct to say that nature imitates art as far as aesthetic values are concerned. That is, nature *per se* has no aesthetic values inherent in it. It is art and the artist by their influence on our visual perception that educate us so that we can see beauty in natural forms. To be sure, the artist makes use of the forms in nature which he sees with his physical eye but these are only the media or means by which he embodies aesthetic content. He communicates to us what it means to him in terms of aesthetic experience and spiritual values. When this kind of communication takes place between the artist and the spectator, then we can say that the work of art is accomplished in the spectator also. "For these works of art ... are an integration of the Self; and by them the sacrificer (participant) likewise integrates himself in the mode of rhythm."[7]

It is true that art and the aesthetic experience are dependent on form, and separate from form they could not exist — for the formless is beyond the mind. But the *svarūpa* (the essence or value) of art is derived from the soul which, when reflected in a form is read

[5] *Mundaka Upanishad*, II. 2.8 (in some editions II. 2.9.)

[6] Quoted in *Vedanta for East and West*, Vol. VI, No. 6, July-Aug. 1957. "Aesthetics and Vedanta" by Swami Ghanananda.

[7] *Aitareya Brahmana*, VI. 27. (parenthesis ours)

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as an aesthetic experience. That is, art is the reading of nature in terms of the soul. Thus it is really the soul-as-it-reveals-the-form that the artist paints or sculpts and not the object in imitation — and the particular form in the artist's mind is the reflector of the soul.

Disciple : If the aesthetic experience in art is closely related to the spiritual realm, how would you explain the phenomenon of so-called "modern" art which is often bizarre, ugly, depressing and has a degenerating effect on the mind ?

Teacher : Many of the artists of that kind have been influenced by the philosophy of existentialism which enjoins the finding out for himself, unaided, the meaning of man's life and existence. So he is striking out on his own to find "new" meanings and values on an individual basis and consequently there has been a rebellion against authority and a denial of all cultural traditions. However, all the great movements of art in world history have been based upon a dominant spiritual tradition — Christian art, Egyptian art, Buddhist art, Hindu art, Japanese and Chinese art, etc. Tradition stands for the accumulated wisdom of a race or people for many centuries. In starting afresh on his own isolated individual efforts man can do but little and thus we see results which are abortive and undeveloped much like the earliest primate.

Disciple : Has not psychoanalysis also had its influence in developing this kind of art, bringing to the fore the contents of the subconscious ?

Teacher : Yes, particularly in surrealistic art and art-by-accident where the contents of the subconscious mind are either the motive power or the subject matter of the work of art. This makes a catharsis for the artist but the results may not be pleasant or aesthetic for the spectator.

Disciple : How do the psychoanalysts look upon art ?

Teacher : Freud classed art (as well as religion) as imaginary and illusory. However, Jung, Fromm, May and others have recognized the therapeutic value of art in re-integrating the personality and have recommended the practice of artistic activities in the phase of re-education in psychoanalysis. In Jung's analysis there is the unconscious mind which corresponds to what we have called the *ānandamaya kosha* — the causal or bliss body. In its unregenerate states it is in an abnormal condition and is characterized by *rajas* and *tamas* — violence, selfishness and inertia. The aim of psychoanalysis is to make the unconscious mind conscious and to clear out the limitations and obscurations that are there so that a healing can take place. This in turn removes the conflicts, sorrows, and misery of the mind and the joy of the bliss body can be experienced.

The role of art in this process is to help purify and integrate the mind. On one hand the skilled artist must achieve a harmonious and unified composition of forms, colours, etc., and on the other hand this must be comprehended by another who perceives it. When this happens the work of art is fulfilled and, in both cases, it has the effect on the mind of purifying its consciousness.

Disciple : Then we could say that the perfection of art is a spiritual goal ?

Teacher : Yes. The content of art being the aesthetic experience, and the content of the aesthetic experience being the bliss of the causal body, and, again, the bliss of the causal body being derived from the Divine Self — then the practice of art is a movement toward Self-realization where the full bliss of the Self is known *per se* without depending on any object for reflection. The highest art is, therefore, the perfection of man. In this, ethics and morality are perfected and all *karma* and ignorance are eliminated ; pure Bliss, Truth and Consciousness alone remaining. Meister Eckhart said, "The perfection of the work is to prepare all creatures to return to God." [8]

[8] *Meister Eckhart* translated by C. B. Evans.

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A POINT IN THE ADVAITA PHILOSOPHY

SWAMI SATSWARUPANANDA

[Swami Satswarupananda is an ex-Editor of *Prabuddha Bharata,* and a senior monk of the Ramakrishna Order. In the present exposition he has discussed the most abstruse point in the Advaita Philosophy from a practical point of view.—*Ed.*]

IN the *Gita* (2.16) Sri Krishna says : "*nāsato vidyaté bhāvo nābhāvo vidyaté sataḥ*", i.e. the non-existent does not come into existence, nor the existent goes out of existence. Or in other words, whatever really exists abides eternally and what appears to exist but really does not exist is not so, even for the duration of its seeming existence. It is perhaps the only axiom the Advaita philosophy has accepted. The beauty of this axiom is, the moment it is stated it is accepted, though apparently we do not find one instance in our work-a-day world to corroborate it ; for all things of this world were not before they were born or made ; are born or made and remain for some time, and then go out of existence — thus falsifying both the parts of the above statement. But the deeper truth of the axiom is so obvious and simple that it is universally accepted when properly understood. What we want to note here particularly is that the above passage has accepted both *abhāva* and *bhāva* ; that there is such a thing as 'non-existence' and there is another which is 'existence', and that the two cannot be interchanged.

Śankara, however, in explaining the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* passage '*naiveha kincanāgre, mṛtyunaivedamāvṛtamāsīt*', (1.2.1), i.e., at first there was nothing, . . . all this was enveloped by 'death only', denied there was any such thing as *abhāva,* 'non-existence'. The sum and substance of his argument is that when we make use of the word 'non-existence' (of a thing) what we really point to is the 'existence' (of something else). When we make an earthen pot go out of existence by breaking it to pieces and say it is 'non-existent' we really mean that the pot has become potsherds, or, more correctly, what appeared as a 'pot' is now appearing as 'potsherds'. When 'potsherds' will go, 'earth-powder' or some other mode or modification of 'earth' will be there. So 'non-existence' as such is nowhere, it is something inconceivable, irrational ; something born of our superstitious attachment to or abhorrence for the continuance of a particular mode. That particular mode also has not gone out of existence but is abiding there in the cause (*kāraṇa*), 'earth', in the same abiding form as *before* and *during* its manifested (fleeting) form. Hence, according to Śankara, '*kāraṇa*' and '*kārya*', 'cause' and 'effect' are both 'existent' eternally. If this is once admitted and we shall have to admit it, all the concepts, percepts, and those that give rise to them will have to be admitted as true, but mutably so, not immutably.[1]

This leads us to two categories of truth, the *pāramārthika* and *vyāvahārika,* the real truth and the practical or pragmatic truth, the truth immutable and the truth mutable and

[1] We have used the words *kārya* and *kāraṇa* because Śankara himself has used them. But modern minds would understand the relation better if we use 'substance' in place of *kāraṇa* and 'mode' instead of *kārya.* There is a further gain in the use of the latter pair — *kārya* has been associated in human mind with some thing 'that was not' but 'now is', which in reality it is not ; since, according to Śaṁkara, all 'modes' are eternally present in the 'substance'. The Sanskrit word *vikāra vi* + *kāra* = *viśiṣṭa* + *kāra* = particularized existence or particular form stands for 'mode'.

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mutating. Later Vedantins (why, even Śankara himself, though he did not elaborate them) went two steps forward and discussed the *prātibhāsika*[2] and the *tuccha*, the illusory and the *non-perceptable* verbal juxtaposition and accepted as truths all that can produce percepts. The '*tuccha*' has not been given that place of honour simply because no percepts can be formed of them. For example the 'square-circle' or 'the son of a barren woman' cannot produce a percept. When we read 'square' or 'son' there is a percept in our minds, but the moment our eyes fall on the other words, viz., 'circle' or 'of a barren woman' those percepts are wiped off and others are formed; the two parts of the verbal juxtapositions together cannot produce any percepts. Hence they are not 'existents', i.e. they have not existence even for a split moment. It may then be argued that they are then the 'non-existents', which Vedanta does not recognize. The point is this: without percepts and consequent concepts there cannot be any knowledge, and without knowledge of a thing how can we assert or deny its existence? Without a definite knowledge of a thing we cannot say it does not exist. We cannot attribute existence to such verbal juxtaposition because they do not conform to the only condition of existence, viz., formation of a concept. But we are not entitled to say that they are 'non-existent', for we have no knowledge of them, no concept about them. And these '*tucchas*' being the only compound words that could have claimed to be non-existents, the category of 'non-existence' is not admitted in Vedanta at all.

On the basis of the above arguments the *prātibhāsikas*, e.g., a mirage, are 'existents', truths, inasmuch as they produce concepts which last until they are stultified by stronger evidences. So we find there are grades of truths or grades in truth. The *prātibhāsikas* are of the least duration and the *pāramārthika* is of the longest duration, the *vyāvahārikas* coming in between. This gradation in truth brings out another point clearly to us, viz., the *prātibhāsikas* are stultified by the *vyāvahārikas*, which again are negated in the *pāramārthika*. But these negations or stultifications do not make them non-existent — the mirage does appear even after our knowledge of the non-existence of water there; in the same way the world of diversity does appear to a *Brahmajña*, a knower of Brahman. These appearances remain there — but shorn of their glories, blunted of their edge; their charms and attractions gone. Naturally man's attitude towards them is changed. Being a seeker after the abiding and these things being transient, man does not run after them but after the immutable.

The value of the *prātibhāsikas* we understand; and we deal with them as long as they last. This is a matter of experience — they can be subjected to tests. But the *vyāvahārikas* get stultified only in the case of persons who have realized Brahman, who are extremely few and far between and who cannot communicate their experience to others, who consequently remain unconvinced. Reason, however, can come to our rescue though it cannot give us the conviction of experience.

II

What is a cause? Are we right if we say that pot is the cause of its potsherds? No. Because the fundamental law of causation is its inherence in its effects or modes — the material cause inheres in its effects, which the pot does not in its potsherds. Therefore the Vedantins say it is the earth and not the pot or any other mode of earth which is the material cause of the potsherds or any other mode, inasmuch as earth inheres in all its modes — a pot is only a prior mode to

[2] '*Prātibhāsika*' has been translated as 'illusory' which while not incorrect, needs a little elucidation. *Pratibhāsa* = (*prati* = resemblance, *bhāsa* = light) means 'resemblance of light' i.e., 'not full light', or 'insufficient light or knowledge', due to the fallacy of mal-observation. A 'mirage', for example, is not something altogether non-existent, but it is not *where* it seems to exist — a case of mal-observation — a shadow of something real, carried far off the space of its real occupation, but maintaining its illusory existence at the false place even after the full knowledge of the real phenomenon has dawned.

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another mode which happens to be posterior in any particular case, viz., potsherds here. This law of inherence makes both the cause and its effects, the substance and its modes, eternal 'existents'. But their values are widely different. Effects being mutable, evanescent, and mutually destructible cannot attract the attention of those who are in quest of the immutable. This evanescence of the modes and their mutual stultification on the one hand and the abiding inherence of the substance on the other are undeniable facts of experience which correspond respectively to all things and thoughts of our work-a-day world and our *kāraṇa* Brahman, which, like our earth in the above example, is inhering in everything but cannot be grasped by any sense or all the senses, nevertheless whose inherence is felt and admitted by reason. But a person who has trained himself in abstract thinking and who has properly understood the meaning of *kāraṇa Brahman* can actually feel its presence in everything as well as in itself, apart from 'things and thoughts'; even as a trained man can see earth in all earthenwares as well as in itself apart and abstracted from all the wares. If a trained man is asked what he actually sees or feels in the wares he will undoubtedly say, he sees and feels only earth in and through all the wares, whereas a man in the street will go on insisting that he sees and feels the wares. But even he will admit that he does not see or feel the wares apart from the earth, when such a question is put to him. A *Brahmajña* sees Brahman everywhere in the same way as a trained man sees earth in all earthenwares. He will never commit the mistake that he is seeing anything but Brahman in, as, and around him.

A *Brahmajña* will, however, have need for drinking water. What will he do in this case? Will he go to a lump of clay or earth-powders for the purpose or to an earthen glass to fill water in? Though all of them are modes of earth, only one or two modes will serve his purpose on the occasion, not others. This is *vyavahāra*. For our *vyavahāra*, practical purposes, all the modes are necessary, but on different occasions different modes will suit us; again the abstract earth, the substance, apart from one or other mode will never be of any practical purpose; nevertheless we cannot dispense with earth, for that means dispensing with all modes we use in our life. Similarly, to trained minds, *kāraṇa Brahman* is that indispensable substance, with which we do everything, without which we cannot do anything. Untrained minds also do the same thing but do it in ignorance, without knowing that they are using earth, and not earthen-modes apart from it. Out of earth modes can be made according to needs, but not from one mode other modes needed can be produced, unless earth's behaviour is known, which again means the needed thing is made from earth and not from the particular mode.

In the light of the above discussion the *sloka* quoted from the *Gītā* means: Ātman (Brahman) alone exists and it can never go out of existence. Bodies, the non-existents, which are but modes are mutable, evanescent; they can never be retained permanently and they have their being and becoming in Ātman. Apart from Ātman they are not 'existents' (not 'non-existents'); in and as Ātman they are surely 'existents,' and as such they cannot be snuffed out of existence by any means.

But when all these are said and done when *vyāvahārikas* and *prātibhāsikas* are conceded to be different from the *tuccha* to the extent that the first two are 'existents' whereas the third is not an 'existent' are we quite sure that the difference is really so wide as that? Can we, trained persons, have any percept or concept of the *vyāvahārikas* without the *pāramārthika*, the Brahman, when once Brahman or Ātman is understood? When once the abstracted 'earth' is properly grasped can we have any percept or concept of any earthen mode without involving earth? To understand anything in this world without taking into consideration the substance, *sat*, Brahman is as impossible as understanding the earthen modes without knowing the substance, earth. Hence in this sense all are *tucchas* except the *Pāramārthika*, except Ātman-Brahman, *Satchidananda*. In this sense the universe of

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matter and mind does not exist, as the Advaitists say. It is *ajāta,* unborn. All 'things' and 'thoughts' being but modes are eternally existing. How can a thing that is already existing be said to be born at a point of time? And yet we all feel and know how great differences are there between the *vyāvahārikas, prātibhāsikas* and *tucchas.* It is thus that the quarrels between realists and idealists, between *bhedavādins* and *abhedavādins* never ceased, nor are likely to cease. But when understood in the above senses there can be no quarrel.

In stating this we are, however, isolated from all orthodox 'isms'. No existing schools will open their doors to us. The Advaitists will not accept us, since they do not attribute any reality to Māyā which converts (?) Śuddha Brahman into Kārana Brahman. The Viśiṣṭādvaitists, who do not recognize substance without modes, knowledge without concepts will slam their doors against us. Dvaitists do not admit the existence of such a substance; to them, truly speaking, modes alone are substances. Thus quarantined, we ensure their safety. But the time has come, we think, we should rethink our conclusions a little liberally without shifting our fundamental positions; and yet all including the orthodox followers of Śankara, will have to yield some ground to others.

Rationally we can reach up to Kāraṇa Brahman. And the Śuddha Brahman, according to this new (?) school, is nothing but the same Kāraṇa Brahman abstracted from the modes and understood, as 'earth' would be understood apart from its modes. Without that abiding, inhering substance, 'earth', the modes cannot be fully understood. Causality, *kārya-kāraṇa-bhāva,* is untenable without, as we have already seen, inherence of the substance in the modes. So Kāraṇa Brahman is not something different from Śuddha Brahman but viewed through causality, manufactured by and percolating through the senses, and for their consumption as *kāryas;* without losing its immutability in the least and yet appearing as many and varied; even as 'earth' remains the same in itself allowing the creation of numerous mutable and mutating modes, its wares. Earth, when properly understood, will appear as not to undergo any change when transformed into different modes. Take, for example, the case of the pot and the potsherds. In this transformation the pot is broken to pieces and the pieces are called potsherds. Can we say that the earth is broken to pieces? This quality of breakability is not in the earth but appears to come to it when dried to a certain degree. We can neither say that the earth is 'dry', in which case pliant 'clay' will not be a mode of earth. From mode to mode new qualities appear in 'earth' and show diversity; but these qualities are not in the substance, 'earth', but in the modes, for they negate one another in modes and so in the substance. 'Earth' is formless by itself and therefore all qualities pertaining to forms are not its but theirs. And, if we deduct all the modal qualities from 'earth' what quality remains for it except 'earth-hood'? This earth-hooded earth is again the cause of all the earthenwares. Similarly Śuddha-Brahman, pure Sat Brahman is the Kāraṇa Brahman in relation to its modes, which are the 'things' and 'thoughts' of the universe. Earth is formless but amenable to forms; Śuddha Brahman is *nirguṇa* but can appear as *saguṇa,* without losing its *nirguṇatva.*

Earth gets the various modal qualities because it comes in contact with objects outside of it. But Śuddha Brahman, being an all-pervasive solitary, does not stand the chance of having extraneous qualities. How to get rid of this difficulty? Beyond 'earth' there are no doubt other things; but if we substitute 'matter' in its place what happens? Everything in this external world is of 'matter' and all the bewildering transformations that are going on in this universe are due to the mingling and contacting of the various forms of the same matter, that does not possess the differential qualities of the modes. If the chemical and mechanical mixtures of modes of the same matter can produce new qualities in the matter which by itself does not possess any of the modal qualities, the same thing may be

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allowed to happen with the Advaitist's Śuddha Brahman. Transformation does not necessarily depend on the existence of extraneous things; modes of the same substance, being exclusive to one another, may as well produce any number of transformations.

Earth the cause of the earthenwares, is the same earth that is the substance as it is in itself, and not in relation to its modes. The capability of the earth to appear as different modes and to remain as pure earth is not itself a different entity with which some relationship is to be sought. It is the very nature, the earthhood of the earth. *Saktimat* is not an *ādhara,* receptacle, of *śakti* or power but *śakti* itself. The electrons, protons, and all the other 'tons' do not hold *śakti* but are *śakti* itself, each with a centre and a field of operation, all *śakti.* And as we have seen, capability is dormant actuality. Therefore when the *Advaitists* assert that all these appearances that constitute the world, inner and outer, are beginningless, are eternally existent in Brahman without violating its purity, reason cannot question its validity. Our points of view do not bring about any change in the nature of the thing viewed.

What do we gain by this kind of (new?)' interpretation of the Advaita philosophy? It endows this world with a greater degree of reality and orientates man's energy towards all noble thoughts and activities that constitute true culture and civilization as a means to the realization of Śuddha Brahman, the eternally abiding Immutable, in the midst of wondrous manifestations, beautiful and ugly, socially virtuous and vicious, acceptable and avoidable. Strictly rational, it makes philosophy more practical. This new distinction between the *vyāvahārika* and the *pāramārthika* instead of leading man to the Ivory Tower makes him a worker in the Lord's vineyard, shoulder to shoulder with others — the pessimism of dealing with the fleeting spectres yields place to the robust optimism of dealing with eternal verities. Nothing is lost, no work is in vain, separation is a passing phase, union is more real; and yet an inordinate attachment for any mode being impossible, man moves in and along freedom. This is what modern man inwardly wants. This is what philosophy should supply. This interpretation has given us the needed thing in time.

The Vedanta says that you are pure and perfect, and that there is a state beyond good and evil, and that is your own nature. It is higher even than good. Good is only a lesser differentiation than evil.

So far as it goes, all dealing with other people, all ethics, is in the phenomenal world. As a most complete statement of truth, we would not think of applying such things as ignorance to God. Of Him we say that He is Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute. Every effort of thought and speech will make the Absolute phenomenal and break Its character.

* * * *

There is one thing to be remembered: that the assertion — I am God — cannot be made with regard to the sense-world. If you say in the sense-world that you are God, what is to prevent your doing wrong? So the affirmation of your divinity applies only to the noumenal. If I am God I am beyond the tendencies of the senses and will not do evil. Morality of course is not the goal of man, but the means through which this freedom is attained. The Vedanta says that Yoga is one way that makes men realize this divinity.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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ST. MEINRAD, THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDER OF EINSIEDELN

WOLFRAM H. KOCH

[Mr. Wolfrom H. Koch, St. Moritz, Switzerland who has been long associated with the *Vedanta Kesari*, in this article relates the life of St. Meinrad in a moving manner. That the life of service sometimes fails to attract saints and draws them into deeper solitude, to commune with the Divine unhampered and unhindered is proved by the life depicted herein.—*Ed.*]

NOT far from the Lake of Zurich, in a beautiful secluded valley there lies the famous Abbey and Shrine of Our Lady of Hermits at Einsiedeln. It is surrounded by charming flower-painted meadows and silent, austere woods, the trees of which seem to climb in endless but self-assured procession up the slopes of the hills encircling the little town and the Benedictine monastery. It is a place of deep spiritual enchantment where nature sensibly calls man to modes of recollectedness and inner peace, and almost involuntarily his soul is lifted up beyond the ephemeral trifles and petty problems of his limited everyday life into the surety and stableness of the Unchanging. On days of approaching storm and rain, when the clouds begin to trail their fluid garments across the summits and the lake of Einsiedeln they shroud the blue of its vast expanse in a mantle of silver, this feeling is even enhanced, for then the encircling hills and the snow-clad peaks at the back of them radiate an intensity of emotion which strongly affects the casual visitor and the pilgrim, filling their hearts with unconscious adoration, making them receptive to the higher influences which have been guarding the place through the centuries and still shield it against the all too materialising effects of outward show and from the empty shallow curiosity of pleasure-seeking crowds which mar such sanctuaries all the world over.

Within the church there is the Chapel of Our Lady of Hermits, erected on the spot where hundreds of years ago St. Meinrad, the spiritual founder of Einsiedeln, spent years of intense spiritual struggle in his little cell, hidden by the trees of the mighty forest which at that time covered the whole country. Below the beautiful carved figure of Our Lady, there stands a tabernacle containing the skull of the Saint. It is here that thousands of pilgrims come and seek to obtain the spark of holiness and illumination to light their little lamps of spirituality and higher aspiration. When the visitor enters the Chapel towards evening after the shadows have begun to gather in the vastness of the mighty church, the golden flames of the candles burning on the altar peacefully enwrap him in the mellow radiance of their light, soothing the daily pain and frustration of his life and giving him, at least for the time being, a wonderful feeling of liberation. Almost imperceptibly he gathers himself in and is borne aloft by the spiritual forces ruling over the sanctuary.

Who was the man who through his renunciation and untiring spiritual striving created a centre of such intense spiritual influence with the help of the Divine that even today. after centuries of strife and wave upon wave of materialism and worldliness have swept over it, it still remains what it ever was to all who are receptive to higher ideals of life and truth? While kingdoms and empires have passed away, peoples risen to power and again disappeared into insignificance, the atmosphere he created through his sacrifice and love still works miracles in the hearts of many men, and still has the power to infuse others with his ideal of life and his call to the highest human fulfilment.

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Meginrad, which means "powerful counsellor" and was later abbreviated into Meinrad, is said to have belonged to a branch of the House of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen. He was born in 797 A.D. of a noble family in Suabia, the Counts of Sulchen. Not much is known of his early childhood, except that he was very soon confided to the care of the Benedictine monks of the Island of Reichenau on Lake Constance where his uncle Erlebald, one of the most learned men of his day, was attached to the monastery. After Hatto, Abbot of Reichenau, relinquished his office to dedicate his life exclusively to God in solitude and strenuous spiritual practices, Erlebald succeeded him and thus was able to give special attention to the training of his nephew. In those times, in the reign of Charlemagne, the sons of nobles were sent in great numbers to the leading monasteries to be instructed in reading and writing and different other sciences, as the emperor, far-seeing as he was, wished to have educated servants who not only knew how to wield the sword and the spear, but also how to serve him and the empire with their intellect and the weapons of their mind. Such a monastic training, however, did not mean that they would later on take up a religious life or in any way be specially religious.

Meinrad's character excelled in modesty, a deep hunger for learning, and an exceptionally strong longing for God, so that his parents finally had to consent to their son's dedicating his whole life to God as a monk, and giving up all his bright prospects in the world.

Both, Abbot Hatto and Abbot Erlebald, had a great share in the formation of their pupil, for they were both very saintly men and conceived greatness and glory only in terms of true sanctity, consecration and purity of life. They very early realized that the highly gifted boy could easily become one of the mainstays of the monastic schools which were the source whence flowed not only the religious teaching and disciplines and the monastic training of that day, but also the worldly learning, the arts, agriculture, and industry which the monks taught the laymen.

Thus after some years as a pupil in the monastic school of Reichenau, Meinrad decided to enter the monastery and was clothed in the habit of St. Benedict. Very soon his superior entrusted him with the guidance of the small monastery of Benken on Lake Zurich where he proved himself an excellent worker in the training of his fellow-monks. All the time his soul yearned for absolute dedication to God, without any distraction or interference, far away from the high-roads of the world. For a long time he struggled with his sense of duty and service towards his monastery and companions and with the deep inner urge to absolute consecration in solitude, but finally the call became so irresistible that his superior gave him permission to withdraw from his work to a hermitage which he was allowed to have built for himself. From this day onward the true mission of his life began to show itself and to bear marvellous fruits, for in spite of all his learning Meinrad could find satisfaction only in the company of the Divine, unhampered and unhidden by companions and outward duties which, to him, were all nothing but obstacles and allurements to divert his soul from its true and only goal.

Many a time from his little monastery of Benken he had watched the hills and the deep woods which covered their flanks with an impenetrable many-patterned carpet and seemed to call out to him to come and hide himself away from the world under the dome of their mighty trees. In his day there were no roads and no footpaths which penetrated into the deep gloom of what was called, the 'Black Woods', and people feared the attacks of the wild animals, bears and boars, which defended their realm against the human intruder. Thus he knew that few could come and disturb him in his contemplation and prayer, and that there was scarcely any place where he could be hidden from the world as absolutely as in those forests. Besides, the snowy peaks, steep precipices, unapproachable chasms and beautiful soft curves of the hills serving as footstools to the lofty rocks and glaciers, brought him an ever clearer message of greater and more lasting values than human life gene-

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rally represented, caught up and crippled as it is in the self-centred duties of a petty existence which only serves its own ephemeral ends and insatiable physical desires. To Meinrad, even a life spent in the apparent service of the Divine in the monastery among his fellow-monks would in the end have meant nothing but utter frustration of all his higher aims and all he was able to give to others through the unstinted sacrifice of even the least germ of worldliness and worldly ambitions in his soul. Both, the dark recesses of the woods singing their hymns to the accompaniment of the uncurbed might of the storms sweeping down from the heights, and the shimmering light of the snow-clad summits greeting him from a distance, bore him the message of the Eternal and of the need to base his life on foundations which ever remain unassailable to flimsy human emotions and the attacks of the worldly-minded. They stood out in all their majesty and grandeur as mighty symbols of transcendent unchanging beauty which, if their call was followed by man, could bring plenitude and harmony for all suffering hearts and thereby renew them and make them true tabernacles of the Divine.

After his decision was taken, a pious lady, the wife of the Lord of the manor of Altendorf, ordered some carpenters to follow him and to build him a chapel and a cell at the spot he would choose. Meinrad climbed Mount Etzel, and there between the summit and a lower elevation of the hill, he found a spot which attracted him so much that he knew it would perfectly serve his ends. Both the chapel and the cell were finished in a short time, and Meinrad was for the first time in his life left there in absolute solitude, alone with himself, his yearning and God. No one knows how he spent his days and nights up there, nor what marvellous realizations of Divine Grace came to him during his desert life which lasted for seven years from 828 onwards. His fame spread farther and farther into the surrounding villages and towns, and people of all stations came to him for enlightenment and consulted him as one inspired. Although during all these years he never left Mount Etzel, this kind of solitude did not fully satisfy him. Again the call went out to him to withdraw into a still higher life of perfect renunciation, and he was possessed with the longing for greater solitude. Again he began to look about him for a spot the seclusion of which would be so great that no one would disturb him in his prayers and contemplation, so that by chastening his body and his emotions still more, he might, in the end, be a greater help to others than he had been up to that day. In the very depths of what was then called the 'Black Woods' he came to a spot which was far less accessible to men, and that was the site where the Abbey of Einsiedeln stands today. There, with the help of some fellow-monks and through the generosity of the Abbess Heilwige, he constructed a hut and a small oratory near a crystalline rushing streamlet.

During the years spent in the whirlpool of God-consciousness and utter absorption in the Divine truths, life rolled by and brought him ever greater realizations and ever greater love for God. Twenty five years passed in this way. Then came the end. Two criminals attracted by the great fame of his charitableness, seeking treasure, penetrated into the 'Black Woods' and were hospitably received by Meinrad. While the saint was entertaining them with the best he had in his little hut, they suddenly attacked him and smote him down with a bludgeon. This happened on January 21st, 861.

There is a beautiful legend which has woven golden threads of love round the crime committed by men. It says that Meinrad had always shared his scanty meals with two ravens who kept him company in his solitude. When these two birds saw what had happened, they pursued the murderers as far as Zürich and there by their incessant and woeful croaking attracted the attention of the magistrates, so that the murder was found out, and the criminals had to expiate their crime at the stake. When the saint's love was betrayed by man, the dumb creatures paid his trust and love with this last service.

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From that day two ravens figure in the coat of arms of the Benedictine monastery of Einsiedeln. The heart and viscera of the saint were buried on Mount Etzel where he had spent seven years in intense spiritual practices, but his body was interned at Reichenau where it was allowed to rest for the next 178 years. During this period Meinrad's little hut and chapel developed into the monastery of Our Lady of Hermits.

In 1039 Meinrad's body was transported to Einsiedeln where it has been venerated for centuries. His skull still bears the mark of the treacherous blow with which his love was requited, and is kept, as has been said, in the Chapel of Our Lady in a tabernacle at the foot of her carved figure. It is exposed every year during the octave of the feast of the saint for the veneration of the pilgrims and all those who love him.

Although in his life-time Meinrad had been a kindly and experienced devotee for the many souls who eagerly sought his assistance and counsel, after his passing away he became the guide who having trodden the road to the Divine himself was able to show it to other souls who had need of a director and friend. The memory of his life spent in intense self-denial and austere practices has ever remained a powerful inspiration which draws the hearts to him and to the goal of his life and all true human endeavour.

As one quietly and reverently passes before the Chapel and is enveloped by the golden radiance of the candles on the altar, strong spiritual influences seem to penetrate one's heart and to call one to that Life which fulfils and yet transcends ordinary human life for ever.

Standing before the beautiful carved figure of Our Lady of Hermits one is reminded of the words of Thomas a Kempis :—'Gather some profit to thy soul wheresoever thou art; so that if thou seest or hearest of any good examples, thou stir up thyself to the imitation thereof'.

The present-day world stands sorely in need of such imitation.

MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous Issue*)

THE TEACHER : 'Please explain it a little more clearly. I could not grasp it properly.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Look here. Suppose there is a brass pot and it is fully covered with clay. From outside would you recognize it as a brass pot? Or would you call it an earthen pot? But because you take it to be earthen pot, will it be really so? Brass remains the same brass whatever we might take it to be. You are mistaken, the pot has not shed off its brazen nature.'

The teacher : 'But, Maharaj, here the case is dissimilar. There in that case brass does not think that it has become clay, it has given up its brazen nature. But here we men think we are not Ātman, but something else.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Not so, my boy, Man does not think that he is something else. For example, he says, "my body", "my mind", "my intellect"; he always uses "my"; he does not say "I am body", "I am mind", etc. And he knows that whatever he calls "his" is not "he". This I-consciousness of man never leaves him, it is always there with him; nobody can deprive him of that. But one thing, he cannot fully understand it, express it. I put it to you, you feel hungry, sleepy; but tell me who you are.'

The teacher : 'That I do not know, Maharaj. But I do feel hungry, sleepy. That

(*Continued on page* 90)

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MUTHUSWAMI DIKSHITAR

K. CHANDRSEKHARAN

[Sri K. Chandrasekharan, M.A., B.L., an Advocate and *litterateur* is also a musician. It has been an accepted tradition and established experience among the spiritual aspirants in India that composing songs, setting them to music and singing them before Deities has a place in spiritual life. That the life of Muthuswami Dīkshitar is an example in point has been pointed out in this interesting article.—*Ed.*]

THE latter part of the 18th century was a period of great fecundity in the South, so far as music is concerned. It was a remarkable coincidence also that three of the great composers of Karnatic music were born in Tiruvarur in the Tanjore District almost within a few years of each other. Tyāgarāja, Dīkshitar and Śāma Śastri, all three within a few years of each other, saw the light of day in Tiruvarur. Already famous for its immense temple as well as for having received some of the Nayanmars at its shrine, Tiruvarur cherished an atmosphere for aesthetics and religion, to blend and bless the land. Sundara Murti Nayanar had sung his psalms in plaintive sweet Tamil invoking the grace of the Deity of the place. The mystical elements of his outpourings had enriched the culture of the place with an ever propitious ethos. Famous temple danseuses had contributed their art to the temple rituals of daily worship. To be born in Tiruvarur was deemed to have secured liberation from rebirth.

It was in the year 1775 that Ramaswami Dīkshitar at the comparatively advanced age of forty had a son born to him as a result of his prayers to the God Muthukumara at Vaitheeswaran Koil. Himself an erudite scholar with a significantly rich gift for music and the arts, he had struck his contemporaries as an unusually talented person. It is attributed to his initiative that at the Tyāgarāja Swami Temple, the *Utsava-Sampradāya-Kirtanas* were regularized and arrangements were made for the temple *nagaswaram* players to perform on appointed occasions. He was also a composer of no mean order. A few *pada-varnas* owe their existence to his creative genius. The oft-sung Hamsadhvani Kirtana, beginning with *Vātāpi-Gaṇapatim* at almost every performance, is one of his masterpieces. In such a home and environment was the boy Muthuswami brought up. After his coming into the world, two more sons, Baluswami and Chinnaswami, were born in succession to his parents. Early initiation into learning and the arts was received by him from his father, whose devotion to Sanskrit and music doubly ensured the cultural attainments of a high order in his son. Perhaps he was married too early or he was not much inclined to worldly pleasures, as such his relationship with his girl-wife proved not quite happy. A second time he was espoused, but destiny was hard, denying him any child of both the marriages. The father was soon transferring the scene of his activities to Manali, near Madras, where a patron of art encouraged his talents by appointing him as the Samsthana Vidwan. The young sons, all three of them, became experts in their knowledge of Music. If Veena became the favourite instrument for Muthuswami, the violin, then freshly introduced from the West into the country at the court of Tanjore, was attracting Baluswami, the younger.

So it came to pass, Muthuswami's extraordinary interest in music induced him to befriend one Chidambara Yogi, with whom he left for Kāśi (Benares) to deepen his art and widen his experience. It was because of his stay for a number of years in the North, that he could enjoy the northern Indian system of

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Hindustani music so well as to combine later in his own compositions the merits of the two styles and produce something unique for its exploration of sound values.

Returning to his native place after a good grounding in the northern style and with his already advanced initiation into the southern style, he soon became absorbed in his own creative work. His skill for collocation of words, especially from Sanskrit, was so very striking, his sense and perception of the form of Rāgas so very complete, his imagination in the composition of the *kriti*-structure so unique, that all looked like the gifts of God in a measure sufficient to evoke all-round admiration. At Tiruttani, it is said, he started composing his first *kirtana* in Māyā-Māḷava-Goula starting with the epithets *Śrināthādi-guru-guho-jayati-jayati* by way of invocation to Lord Subrahmanya. The composition bears the features at once instructive of the first lessons to be learnt by students of music as well as satisfying the aesthetic appeal to higher intellects by the *Ārohaṇa-avarohaṇa-krama* adroitly introduced in its structure along with the *viloma-krama,* a technique reminding in its rise (the Āsthana) the Gopura of a temple. He placed the *mudra,* Guruguha to denote his authorship in every song from him. Another distinctiveness of his composition is the way he would enshrine the name of the Rāga also in a natural setting in the *kirtana.*

His art is certainly a sophisticated one in the sense that spontaneity is not its crowning merit. Still as a work of art, his composition takes a prime place in the impressions of connoisseurs. His sonorous diction added to Swarāksharas (letters conforming to the Swaras), skilfully woven into the Sahitya in places appropriately bringing out the meaning, preserve for us uncloying effects of sound and sentiment. Further, the long-drawn-out sweetness, embalmed in the curves and crescendos of the melody patterns he has chosen for his songs, is so alluring that few can resist it despite even unfamiliarity sometimes with the language of the Sāhitya. In short, the richness of his music, the variety of his songs, the lore and profound knowledge of subjects like astrology, *mantra-Śāstra,* Sthala-puranas (chronicles of places), the happy blend of the techniques of both the Southern and Northern styles, the total impression of a massive work of art he could produce — all have tended to mark him out as an original artist.

Turning to his compositions, an initiated Rasika will find the way he has set to music the Sahitya and his comprehensive employment of the Rāga-Sanchara (development of the Rāga) create for him a feeling as of moving in a huge temple with broad and long corridors, with a mounting pile of *gopurams* (towers) and an inner sanctuary dedicated to some favourite deity. Always a God or a Goddess of the place he has visited will be the chief theme for the Sāhitya, and round the name of the Deity the song will contain either attributes of His or Her special significance or any lore connected with the place. In choosing his themes he has never been partial to either Śiva or Viṣṇu. He has maintained throughout an impartial outlook, despite his *iṣṭadevatā* having been Guru Guha or Lord Subrahmanya.

Tradition has added a number of anecdotes, like his *kirtana* in Śankarābharaṇa with the words *Akshaya-linga-vibho,* praying for opening the temple doors of a shrine where the authorities had been careless to have not conformed to the temple worship at scheduled times. Again, it is said that when his wife felt sad and disconsolate that little material help for food and comfort was available to run the home and exhorted him to seek some patron for providing him with the necessary things for creature comforts, his reply assumed the form of a song in *rāga* Lalita starting with the words *Hiraṇmayeem Lakshmeem bhajāmi; Heena-janāśrayam tyajāmi.* 'Let me worship the goddess of plenty directly to give me the things I need; not at all will I crave of small men for my comfort.' Indeed we can trace somewhat a parallel to the purport of this song in Tyāgarāja's famous song (*nidhicāla sukhamā*: *Rāmuni sannidhi-seva-sukhamā*) 'which is preferable, service to Rama or worship of mammon'. Another story which is current in the South is that when Dīkshitar visited

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Ettiyapuram, where also happened his final rest, the drought there happened to be terrible, people complained of failure of the monsoon. He then burst forth into a song in Devāmṛta-varshini *rāga,* wherein he called upon the Lord to pour down, *varshaya varshaya* (descend in rains), and the entire country was flooded with welcome rains.

Many and varied are the episodes related to enhance his reputation as a great *bhakta.* One cannot easily perceive how else he could have so vigilantly chronicled the specialities of every temple he had visited, giving not only its claim to hoary tradition and fame, but also the main events connected with its importance from the annals of saints and devotees. Vast was his knowledge of astrology. One finds in his Navagraha *kirtanas* his application of the theory of planetary influence on one's life, as also the prescribed rituals to be observed to ward off evil results. It is even said that the particular occasion for his devoting his composition towards the subject of astrology was due to one of his disciples Thambi Appan, a *nagaswara vidwan,* having fallen ill for long with a severe malady. Again, one of Dīkshitar's fortes, it may be said, was his habit of enriching *kirtana's* with the invocation of God's grace in all the eight cases in Sanskrit *Śabda.* His *Navavarna kirtanas* are examples of this feature and his composition on the presiding Goddess of Tiruvarur, Kamalambika, bear the stamp of his inordinate devotion to the Goddess as well as the employment of delightful phrases and epithets describing her various aspects. One wonders which is greater, whether his ardent Mother-worship or his particular devotion to Lord Subrahmanya in his heart.

Dīkshitar was an Advaitin at heart and hence his mind had never once been drawn to any subjective feeling, that as a Jīvātma his place was one always on a lower level than that of the Paramatma. In a song in the raga *poorvi* he says emphatically *Guruguha-dāsoham no-chet guruha evāham.* 'If I am not the servant of the Lord Guha, I am He Himself.' The thought, basic in Advaita, of the immanence of the Spirit in every body and the indivisibility of the all-pervading Spirit, had so influenced him that he would sing — the Upaniṣadic aphorism, *aham Brahmāsmi* — 'I am Brahman'. In many songs, he has thus composed, one finds the treasures of the Advaitic concept explained. Words from Śankara's Bhashya, epithets from the *Lalita Sahasranāmam,* phrases from the *Bhagavad Gita* and similar echoes of language and sentiments of ancient texts, are scattered about in his multi-phased melodies.

If as a traditionalist he has not swerved from the path chalked out by Venkatamakhin in his systematization of *rāga-lakshaṇas,* in his famous *chatur-daṇḍi-prakāśikā* — a great work on music and the system of *Melakartas* — he was not also averse to making successful experiments in introducing *bhāvas* from the Northern style, thereby only proving how the two systems are essentially one with only differences in presentation. His erudition was deep; his aesthetic perception was original in some ways; his *sāhitya* was resonant with dignity and delicacy; his mind dwelt on an altitude difficult for ordinary artists to approach; his prime objective was to exhaust in his songs all the pilgrim spots of this vast continent of Bhārata-varsha from Kāśi to Rameswaram; his inimitable peculiarities of style of composition have all become part and parcel of the great heritage of Karnatic music, handed down by Purandara Dasa and Kshetrajña, enriched by Tyāgarāja and Śāma Śastri, and ivigorated by his own ever-resounding Sanskrit and Śāstra. His familiarity with Telugu and Tamil was responsible for his composing *kirtanas* in *maṇipravāla* (interlinking of words from Tamil and Telugu). Also Rāgamālikas (garlands of rāgas) have emerged from him. His capacity to traverse the entire gamut of musical types in his compositions is amazing. His mind never felt fatigue in rendering all that he knew from the Śāstras, Vedanta and religious literature of our land, into songs, thereby preserving for the world much that needs must survive if the subjects should otherwise get lost or forgotten.

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It is said that one of his brothers, Chinnaswami Dīkshitar died young, but his other brother Baluswami migrated to Ettiyapuram and was enjoying the patronage of the Zamindar, who was a great connoisseur of arts himself. In the course of his travels, Muthuswami Dīkshitar reached Ettiyapuram in Tirunelveli district and joined his brother. His last days were spent with his brother and in the company of his own disciples. Before he actually breathed his last on the Naraka Chaturdasi day at the age of sixty, he, it is said, dwelt upon the Mother (Meenakshi of Madurai) and his lips uttered Her name. The song *Meenakshi me-mudam-dehī* ('Oh Goddess, give me Thy bliss'), wherein he addressed her as *pāśamochani*, 'Liberator from bonds' indicates that ere long he would be released from earthly ties. So, as in the case of another saint of Bengal, Ramaprasād, whose end, it is said, got indicated to his followers through a particular song of his, the end came to Dīkshitar after he finished his supplicating song to Goddess Meenakshi.

More than a century and a quarter have elapsed since he passed away. Still the Karnatic system of music, so very intricate and enticing, treasures the songs of Dīkshitar, which are veritable mines of intellectuality in art. Sophisticated art may be in some instances not hankered after by *rasikas* as spontaneity alone can keep them bound. Nevertheless Dīkshitar's contribution has a distinct place in the field of aesthetical experience in music. His adherence to the pure and pristine form of the *rāgas*, as handed down from the ancients, is itself a corrective source to many an aspirant in music. Whenever doubts assail exponents of the art regarding the true form of a *rāga* Dīkshitar's *prayoga* (presentation) is sought after for clarification and enlightenment.

Comparisons are sometimes made of the individual excellences of the *musical trinity*, as the three, Tyāgarāja, Dīkshitar and Śāstri, are together termed. True, for a student seeking knowledge, the three composers with their distinctness and individual contributions, have an equal claim on his careful attention. All were great devotees. If Tyāgarāja's Rama captivated him so much as to make him pour out his soul in a stream of songs and tunes, each in its own way irridiscent with sparkling effects, if Śāma Śāstri made his own *laya prastara* (measures) an integral part of the inner rhythm of his music and thus enchained hearts to his Mother, Kāmākshi, whom he approached as a babe its own suckling mother, Dīkshitar never dwelt upon any other but the Supreme (Overall) Soul, however apparently he might appear to dwell on Sagunopāsana of a God or Goddess, presiding in a temple here below.

Later composers who have followed the *trinity* in its wake cannot escape the influence of the great early pioneers. They have got so soaked in their very musical phrases and epithets addressed to their deities that when in their turn they resort to the art of composing, the very remembrance of the earlier *sāhitya* chases them and induces them to repeat them in some form or other. The best form of appreciation is no doubt imitation, though in art individuality or originality will be sacrificed by such an attempt. Still, many known later artistes do not show the least compunction to follow the earlier composers in every contour and detail. For their confidence and sureness only emanate when they are close to them. Without any disrespect to the post-*trinity* composers, they appeal to *rasikas* not so much by their originality but by their devotion to the old Masters. Classicism in music is thus ensured only when for time to come the beauty of art in works of an earlier day happen to entertain fresh entrants into the field and instil in *rasikas* an unfailing experience and intimation of a higher life.

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PHILOSOPHY OF TRIPURA RAHASYA

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI

[Prof. S. Rajagopala Sastri, M.A., M.Litt., is the Head of the Department of Philosophy, Vivekananda College, Madras. His delineation of the philosophy of Tripura Rahasya here, brings to us the philosophy of the concept of God as the Divine Mother .—*Ed.*]

ONE very important and significant feature in our religion is the conception of Godhead which is in terms of both God and Goddess. The latter is the Divine Mother, the principle of *śakti* or energy and the very basis of the universe. The distinction between Śiva and Śakti is as old as time itself. One school of thought emphasizes that both are indissolubly associated with one another and that the one without the other is ineffective. The pure Consciousness and Existence which is Brahman unless associated with Śakti, the Devi, Mahāmāya, the active Principle, is merely the Nirguna Brahman who neither creates nor manifests the universe. This Principle of energy when personified becomes the Devi who becomes manifested in several forms like Gauri, Lakshmi, Kali and so on. Śri Vidyā lays considerable emphasis on this Devi *upāsana* both as religion and as philosophy. The whole of the Tantra literature is an elaboration of this underlying principle for worship, *mukti* and knowledge.

Śri Vidyā is the worship of the Supreme Being as Goddess and is traced to the Vedas themselves. Puranas like the Devi Bhagavata, Markaṇḍeya Purāna, Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa emphasize this Devi worship and give detailed accounts of Her exploits against the forces of evil in this cosmos. Advaita is usually the accepted system of thought here though some make a distinction between Vedanta and Tantra and Śri Vidyā — the Absolute here being the transcendental and Pure Cit Śakti. The Tripura Rahasya is a book of this kind. This is also known as the Haritāyana Samhita, Haritāyana being the name of the author who compiled it under instructions from Brahmā. The book is said to consist of 12,000 slokas and divided into three sections — the Māhātmya Khanda, the Jñāna Khanda and the Charyā Khanda. Nothing is known about the last part of the work The first Khanda covers the manifestations of the Supreme Being as Durga, Lakshmi, Sarasvati, Lalita and so on. It narrates the incidents more or less as given in the Saptasati and in the Lalitopakhyāna. The Jñāna Khanda is more practical and gives us the philosophy underlying the work together with the practice and discipline needed to realize the Supreme. This is probably the most important part of the Samhita. We are told in the Māhātmya Khanda that Mahādeva taught this to Viṣṇu who narrated the same to Brahmā. Later when Viṣṇu took the incarnation of Dattātreya, he taught it to Paraśurāma who in his turn instructed Haritāyana.

This work is similar in certain respects to another famous work by name "Yoga Vāsiṣṭa". Both teach generally the Advaita philosophy but in a few places go beyond it and teach the doctrine that the whole cosmos is merely mental. In both we have a large number of stories which reinforce the teachings. The Tripura Rahasya may also be regarded as a sustained system of philosophy and it is inspiring poetry of a very high order. Both the books are highly practical in their aim and give us a discipline for the realization of the Absolute. The term "Tripura" has many meanings but the one that is taught here is that it stands for the mystery beyond the three states of consciousness — *jāgrat* (the waking state), *svapna* (the dream state) and *suṣupti* (the deep sleep state). Pure consci-

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ousness is continuous throughout these three states and this is the Devi Tripura, the Supreme Goddess, the Being of all beings, the Transcendental Consciousness, Chit Śakti. The whole book is full of descriptions about this Goddess. "She is the Transcendental Tripura. . . . She is called Brahman in the Vedas, Viṣṇu by the Vaiṣṇavites, Śiva by the Śaivites and Śakti by the Śāktas. There is indeed nothing but She. She holds every thing by Her prowess, as a mirror does its images. She is the illuminant in relation to the illumined. . ." She is the Impersonal as well as the Personal Brahman beyond whom there is nothing. In some verses of the book, Brahman and Tripura are taken as synonymous and very often there is an imperceptible change from the masculine to the feminine, from God to Goddess. God has no form but if the devotee worships Him as associated with a particular aspect or body, He manifests Himself to that devotee in that particular form. Godhead should be worshipped as the transcendental *Cit* but if this pure state is not easily comprehensible, one may worship Her in a concrete form.

Indian philosophy is entirely practical in the sense that it instructs the seeker not to waste time in mundane pursuits which merely give ephemeral pleasure but to aim at liberation, the state of *mukti* in which one realizes that one is nothing but the Supreme. The first preliminary is a spirit of *vairāgya* or detachment. Goddess Tripura should be constantly worshipped and meditated on and it is only through Her grace that *vairāgya* will come which would lead to *vicāra* or inquiry. When one attains the spirit of *vairāgya* he ceases to identify the worldly happiness with eternal bliss or *ānanda* of the liberated state. At the same time, inquiry should not be based on dry logic without any basis. The fundamental statements about the Self and the state of liberation should be taken as authoritative and inquiry or logic should be subsidiary to these intuitively grasped facts. Hemalēkha in instructing Hemachūda says very clearly, "People will not gain any thing either during their life-time or after death by endless discussions or blind acceptance; there is hope for the latter, and there is none for the former". Hence, discrimination should be exercised even in inquiry; it should be guided by positive facts and it should not be an intellectual anarchism. At the same time it should be noted that a mere intellectual understanding is of little use unless it is accompanied by sādhana to achieve Self-realization.

Before taking up the question of the nature of the Self which is the same as *Cit*, we may take up the question of the nature of the manifested world. It has been made clear that the world or the universe is neither a vibration nor a metamorphosis: it is a projection of consciousness like the images of a mirror. The world is not a creation in the sense of its being made like a pot. The universe has no origin for the reason that *Cit* has no beginning and the manifested world is nothing more than the consciousness of the transcendental *Cit*. How this is effected is given in greater detail in the Text. The eternal transcendental Consciousness divides Herself of Her own free will into two of which one is sentient and the other insentient. The sentient is called Sadāśiva *tattva* which is described as Īśvara in the Upaniṣads. Īśvara looks at the other phase — the insentient and the unmanifested which nonetheless is Himself. This is the Māyā principle. At the time of creation Īśvara identifies the insentient phase with His body and divides Himself into three aspects, viz., Rudra, Viṣṇu and Brahmā. These are many in number and these in their turn manifest the cosmos which consists of innumerable worlds. In spite of all these changes it remains clear that all these are the images in the mirror of the Absolute Cit. The Supreme Being, the pure transcendental Intelligence thus covers the whole universe of creation. The cosmos shines because of Her self-luminance.

The book critically discusses some solutions by the several systems of thought and refutes them. The theory that the world is merely an accidental product due to nature is refuted on the ground that a definite cause should be inferred for a phenomenon and that nothing should be regarded as causeless. The theory of the Vaiśeṣikas, that the atoms constitute the

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cause of the world, is no better, for the atoms are insentient and one may ask how these insentient and invisible atoms could join together to produce a perceptible world. There should have been some intelligent power to guide these atoms and join them. The Sāmkhya theory also is equally wrong for it is unable to answer the question: how was the disturbance caused to the equilibrium of the gunas. It is clear that there should be an intelligent cause who created the world. The universe is not physical or material in the usual sense of the term but only mental, for the cause — the transcendental *Cit* — is pure intelligence and hence what She creates is equally mental or merely conscious. The universe cannot be conceived in any other way. Outside the Cit, the universe has no separate reality just as the image in a mirror cannot exist unless there is some thing whose image it is. The universe thus has a creator and this creator is an intelligent principle. The vastness of the creation precludes our understanding the nature of the creator. He is immanent and transcendent — both in the world created and also beyond it. In one way we may compare it to the dream world of the individual consciousness. It is the individual who dreams and nevertheless he is not lost in the dream. The dream is mental and is *his* creation. He survives the dream. All these are true of the Divine Creator. "Creation is like a magician's trick and it is a city born of divine imagination. There is no time or place not permeated by consciousness. When we say that a thing exists, it only means that they become illumined to us and as such pertains to consciousness alone. Objects themselves are not conscious by their nature for they require for their existence perception by a conscious being. Just as reflections have no substance in them outside the mirror, so also the things of the world have no substance in them outside of the cognizing factor — Devi Mahāmāya."

It may be contended that the ideas of imagination are merely subjective and are not physical and tangible, while the objects in the world seem to be detailed, objective and tangible. How then can we say that the objective things are merely images without substantiality and corporeality? Dattatreya answers this question by saying that all these depend on the nature of the excellence of the reflecting medium. Water, polished surfaces and mirror — all manifest differences which are revealed in the images they present. The mirror is soiled by extraneous dirt while consciousness has nothing foreign to it and hence its reflections are unique. The objects, since they are only images are not self-luminous but require to be illumined by another's cognitive faculty. It may be argued that the mirror illustration should not be carried far, for objects are necessary for producing images while this does not apply in the case of consciousness. But do we not have day-dreams and hallucinations clearly pictured in the mind even in the absence of any object behind them? In the place of the object we have the peculiar imaginative quality of the mind and when this imagination is deep and profound it takes shape as creation. A magician's creation is only temporary while a yogi's creation may be permanent. The creation of the Divine Consciousness is eternal and does exist with the Creator. If it is rightly understood as a mere image, its binding force is removed. The question of the permanence of the created world is thus explained as depending on the strength of the will of creation. This is the reason why the world appears as real. Why does it continue to exist even after it is known to be merely of the stuff of dreams? The answer is that the world becomes for us what we are accustomed to think of it. The universe has been taken as real and objective from time immemorial and hence it looks as if it is actually real. The world created by Viśvāmitra is no less real than the 'real' world in which we live.

It is impossible in the small compass of this paper to give a faithful account of all the teachings of the book whose philosophy we are striving to outline. Every thing that is taught in the book is of profound importance. The teachings are so bold, original and so convincingly taught that one has to read, understand and meditate on these truths. The "Vidyā

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Gītā," in which the great Goddess Herself, in response to the request of the Devas, teaches them the quintessence of the divine wisdom requires special mention. She is the Supreme Being, the transcendental Cit, the Abstract Intelligence, the originator of the cosmos, its sustainer and its resolver. She is the eternal "I" — the Self. One has to realize this in the deep stillness of one's thought similar to that of the deep sea free from waves. The Devi's concrete form is the eternal combination of Śiva and Śakti, an undivided union pervading the three phenomenal states of *jāgrat*, *svapna* and *suṣupti*. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra are all Her manifestations. Being non-dual and abstract Intelligence, She manifests as the smallest detail in the world and also as the whole world. Though Her manifestation is in eternal and infinite ways, She is free from defects or blemishes. She is eternally free and not in any way bound up with the created world. Knowledge of the Godhead should be under the two categories of the dual and the non-dual. The former relates to worship and the latter to realization. Duality, though ultimately based on mental imagery, is very effective in leading us to the non-dual consciousness, and worship of Abstract Intelligence in a concrete form is essential for non-dual realization. The sense of non-self must be completely annihilated because there is nothing beyond it. This results in Self-realization which is the end of all misery and unhappiness. In the absence of duality there is no fear, for when the knower, the knowledge and the known merge into unity, that is the state of Mokṣa and in the words of the Upaniṣads, "Who is to be afraid of whom?" These three factors are not really different from one another and the so-called differences are merely conventions retained for the smooth working of the empirical world. It is the Self which manifests as the knower, the known and the knowledge. The cycle of births and deaths endures with the reality of a mountain so long as this differential cognition lasts. The moment the manifestations are realized to consist of the Self alone without any mixture of non-self, the cycle of births comes to a stand still and is broken down to fragments.

There are some evil propensities preventing Self-realization and of these the first is want of faith in the Guru and in the words of the Śāstras. Want of faith has its roots in unfavourable reasoning (*kutarka*), and dry and purposeless logic. The reasoning must be favourable to the Śruti Vākyas and should not be indulged in merely for the sake of arguments. It is not that reason is useless. Reason unaided by the Śruti cannot be successful in the transcendental sphere; but it should be noted that even the Śruti Vākya cannot be opposed to reason. The second propensity which prevents realization is desire of any type. A mind engrossed in desires cannot have a spiritual inclination. Hence desire must be replaced by dispassion and this will prevent the mind's pursuit after pleasure. The third difficulty is caused by the accumulated obstruction to all efforts in the spiritual direction due to the past *karmas*. The only way in which this can be overcome is by worshipping the Devi and unreservedly surrendering oneself to Her with devotion. This effectively clears away all the bad *samskāras* in the way of spiritual enlightenment and realization.

A very interesting discussion in the book is the reconciliation between the state of *jivanmukti* and the claims of *prārabdha karma* to operate even in that state. The book divides the *jñānis* into three orders — lowest, middle and the highest. *Pārabdha* cannot be checked by realization of the Self. But there is no enjoyment of its fruits by the realized *jñāni*. *Jñānis* of the lowest order also enjoy pleasure and pain like the ignorant but their remembrance of such experience is frequently broken up by intervals of realization, while *jñānis* of the middle class respond very indistinctly to the pains and miseries of the world and these are soon forgotten. Those of the highest order are left untouched, for they always remain as a burnt cloth but retaining its original form. They never find any thing apart from the Self. *Prārabdha* seems to operate only in the case of the lowest of the *jñānis*. *Karma* is only inferred by the onlooker according to his own ideas of pleasure or pain-giving experiences for the *jñāni*. The least among the *jñānis* is apt to

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relax from the realization of the Self and then get mixed up with the world at intervals when he experiences pleasure or misery. The conjecture of *prārabdha* is meaningful only in his case and not in the case of the other *jñānis*.

An extremely interesting allegory is narrated in the book which easily enables us to understand the causes of human bondage. The story narrates the various circumstances by which man loses his purity, becomes corrupt and gets entangled in *māyā*. More than any abstract teaching, the story convincingly explains man's fall from the pure state. Many other concrete problems are discussed in the book and it is not possible to give an exhaustive account of these. It is not relevant to our purpose here to discuss how far the philosophy that is taught in the book is of the same kind as that of Advaita and how far it is different. This will raise a more profound question about the relation between the Tantra and the Vedanta philosophy. But these are clearly beyond the purvey of this essay. The extraordinarily keen insight and vision that is found in the book in its discussion of the fundamental problems is one that rouses our interest and makes us feel that this philosophy is second to none either in its insight or in its comprehensiveness. May Goddess Tripura enable us to realize these truths given in this book.

KANT AND ŠAṄKARA

P. K. SUNDARAM

[Dr. P. K. Sundaram, M.A. Ph.D., is Reader, Advance Centre of Philosophy, University of Madras. In this essay he has compared the thoughts of the two master-minds, of the West and the East, in a brief but interesting study.—*Ed.*]

I

KANT

DOGMATIC philosophy took for granted the competence of the understanding to apprehend the nature of things. Hume shook this dogmatism to its foundations and Kant had to wake up and take up the gauntlet. He became very critical of the pretensions of dogmatic philosophy and set in motion a thorough inquiry into the *modus operandi* of the intellectual faculties of man and called for their credentials. Dogmatic philosophy had hitherto assumed that the totality of things as a whole to their limits could be mapped out by the operation of the intellect and surveyed in a system. But Kant sounded a warning against transcending the limits of reason and experience. Thought overreaching its terms of reference will land itself in contradictions.

Thought, said Kant, using an imagery, is like a dove which might think that because it is easy to fly in the air, it will be as easy to fly in the vacuum forgetting that it is precisely the air that bears it aloft and sets the limits to the flight. Kant wrote: "I found that many of the axioms which we have regarded as objective, are, as a matter of fact, subjective ; that is, they express the conditions under which alone we are able to apprehend or understand the object".

These conditions are of sensibility and understanding, forms of intuition (space and time) and categories (like causality and necessity). The sense-manifold are harmonized into a synthetic unity by the categories. But yet, these forms and categories can have no application beyond what is given in experience. They are *a priori*, do not originate in experience. Everything given in experience should have to appear only through these forms of space and time and categories of unity, necessity and causality. What we know is only the *phenomenon*, as distinguished from the *noumenon*. The '*thing-in-itself*' is a limiting concept, a purely negative one, to which we

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are brought by means of the investigations of the conditions and limits of our knowledge. All our knowledge and the objects of that knowledge are empirically real and transcendentally ideal. To hold them to be transcendentally real is to fall into the transcendental illusion.

For the same reasons given above theoretical reason can never give us knowledge of the Self, God and Nature. Speculative psychology, speculative theology and speculative cosmology have tried to reach the simple unity of the soul, God and Nature but in vain. They have been beguiled into the transcendental illusion. Rational proofs for the existence of God and cosmological enquiries into the beginnings of things yield only a crop of antinomies. Mutually contradictory propositions can be asserted of the beginning of the world in time and its being enclosed in space, and the absence of the beginnings and limits. Neither of these can be proved false to the credit of the other. The world must have a beginning in time. But if it did, whereat did it begin? Antecedent to its beginning, there must have been an empty time in which there could be no conception of a beginning since there could be no distinction between different moments in what is empty. Herein lie the limits of reason.

Similarly with reference to cause. If we trace back the causal chain we should have to arrive at a First Cause which itself is not an effect. But, antithetically, an absolute First Cause is inconceivable, since it can have no relation to its effect. Yet, somehow, the First Cause must have started to produce its effect. Otherwise, we would not be pre-occupied with the world-effect now.

Kant is certain that we should keep the distinction between our *mode* of apperception and the thing-in-itself. What is true of the phenomenal appearance is not true of the noumenal. For instance, only phenomenal appearances obey causal laws supplied by the *a priori* categories. Since the thing-in-itself, the noumenon does not come under these categories, it need not obey the causal law. Man, as a physical being, is subject to laws. But as *homo noumenon,* in himself, he is free. He then belongs to the intelligible order. He is the cause of the whole series of actions in which his empirical character unfolds itself.

The ideas of God and personal immortality are only symbols of a something which thought cannot express in adequate form. God must be postulated as a power that harmonizes the needs of a free moral individual and the hard cause-bound physical nature. Under the certainties of the postulates of God and immortality alone, moral actions proceed. The moral actions *done* are as much phenomena as any other natural occurrence. But the will which is rational, universal and typically human is free. This freedom is rather a question of faith than of knowledge. Faith means holding something for true on grounds sufficient to act upon but not fully to satisfy one's intelligence.

II

Śaṅkara

The thing-in-itself for Śaṅkara could only be Brahman. Everything else is an appearance, an object of experience. Appearance here is not epistemological but ontological. It is not to any human mind that the world is said to *appear* in experience. Rather in Brahman, the world and the mind are projected together. Thus, an individuated mind is as much an 'appearance' as matter.

What experience to human mind is like to be, it is true, is decided by the *a priori* constitution of the intellect with its capacity to categorize. All sources and means of knowledge and mind with its functions of doubt, determination, reflection and synthetic unity of apperception are constituted by the principle of *avidyā*.[1] The human mind or any mind for that matter, is constructed universally alike and our mode of knowledge cannot but be what

[1] *itaretarādhyāsaṁ puraskṛtya sarve pramāṇa-prameya-vyavahārāḥ laukikāḥ vaidikāśca pravṛttāḥ, sarvāṇi ca śāstrāṇi vidhipratiṣedhamokṣaparāṇi* :
Śaṅkara on Brahma-Sutras.

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it is in fact. Thus is the world of public knowledge assured.

But there is no contribution from the mind to the world-structure of any feature that does not belong to that structure, according to Śaṅkara. There is, theoretically, nothing that is essentially unknowable in the object. The dualism between the object as an appearance and the object as the thing-in-itself is unnecessary and even dangerous, for, as it occurred to some of the post-Kantians, the thing-in-itself may be got rid of and what will remain are truly the appearances. This is perilously near subjectivism against which both Kant and Śaṅkara wage a consistent war. We have to assume that there could be, and is, a direct knowledge of the object as it is. That there are errors and that those errors are corrected is a pointer to this fact. It is not possible perhaps to lay down the nature of the relation of mind to object. It is only a fact, as we experience it, that the objects are known as they are and not as we would like them to be known. That there are limitations to what we can know is obvious enough. But this limitation does not apply to the knowledge of objects alone. The principle of causality, for instance, is a real factor in the world of nature as it is in the world of moral actions. But when Śaṅkara inveighs against the principle of causality and advocates *vivarta,* it is on the basis of an analysis of the nature of the world, not as an epistemic principle. He tries to prove thereby that the mind as well as nature seem to obey causal order which when analysed will show that the succession in time, in causal operations and manifestations of diverse forms is more apparent than real. At the same time causality belongs to the thing-in-itself. The space-time-causal world is an apparent production, so to be known by space-time-cause-bound mind. But the notions of limitedness and causality when analysed will show forth the untenability, not of the thought alone but of the categories of the world too. In a sense then, for Śaṅkara, the real is the rational. Thought corresponds to what is outside mind, without any third element. While a philosophical analysis in Śaṅkara has the negative result of showing what truth is not, by showing the untenability of the causal law of the world, it is "*faith*" or "*intuition*" that takes us to Reality face to face. It is the *anubhava* or *satya-darśana.* Here knowing is the same as *being.* This intuition is a free condition, transcending the subject-object relation.

Kant's idea of moral duty presumes the free man. For, 'ought' implies 'can'. The practical has always the primacy over the theoretical. What is merely problematical for the theoretical reason, becomes a guaranteed fact for the practical. There is thus no contradiction between the two. Śaṅkara fixes the uniqueness of the individual in two of his qualifications: Knowledge and rational will: *karma-jñāna-adhikāraḥ.* Man alone of all beings is endowed with these qualifications. He is in *need*; this need *can be fulfilled.* Śaṅkara uses the words '*arthitvāt*' and '*śaktatvāt*', meaning "because he is in need", and "because he is capable of fulfilling that need".[2] Commenting on the *Gītā* verse (II. 47) Śaṅkara is emphatic that one should do one's duty whatever may be the results, pleasant or unpleasant. There should be no thirst for the advantages that may accrue from the action. A de-ontological ethic resembling that of Kant's is discernible here. But there is a difference. Śaṅkara will substitute the *mantra,* "Duty for God's sake" for "Duty for Duty's sake" — yet *niṣkāma-karma* is yoga. He goes on to say, commenting on *Gītā* (II. 50), that duty done for its own sake and for the sake of Īśvara, is a power which releases man from the thraldom of causal nexus. In morality, then, is freedom assured; and assured even while one is living in the body. Duty but for no consequence thereof, bespeaks a benign evenness of mind which ushers one into the gates of wisdom to face the Truth. "Thy bounden duty is the obligatory or the categorical and which is not prescribed as a means to a specific end. Action

[2] See his commentary on the *Taittiriya—Upaniṣad, Valli* II, *Anu.* I. *Puruṣa eva hi śaktatvād arthitvāt aparyudastatvācca karma-jñāna-yor adhikriyate.* '*Need*' implies the '*Ought*' and '*Capacity*' implies the '*Can*'.

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is superior to inaction", writes Śaṅkara commenting on *Gītā* (III. 8).

The free central core of luminosity in man is shown not merely by an analysis of moral will, but even by an analysis of cognitive experience in Śaṅkara's philosophy. The *avasthā-traya-vicāra* clearly establishes beyond doubt that the *sākṣi-caitanya*, the witness-intelligence is free and undetermined. This *sākṣi*, to be sure, is not an object of speculative psychology but the principal subject, the logical and existential, of any speculation whatsoever. What is more, it is called *sākṣi* only in relation to states of our experience. By itself, it merely is *turīya-ātman*, transcending the causal-bound-becoming. The intuitive Self is like the Mahā-matsya which swims untrammelled across and against the current of water.

Badness of the corrupt will, Kant says, is responsible for the inversion of the right relation in which reason rules and it puts the *converse relation* into the picture. In Śaṅkara, distorted will is the result of false vision, ignorance, *avidyā*. It is this principle of *avidyā* that inverts the right perception and puts things in converse relation.

Kant symbolically interpreted Christian tenets. There is an invisible church where every individual stands face to face to Truth. It is in the heart of man that a war is waged between knowledge and ignorance, good and evil. Knowledge and good belong to the realm of the eternal and the free ; ignorance and evil to the temporal and the bound. Knowledge in Śaṅkara's terminology is *samnyāsa, nivṛtti*, beyond good and evil. To knowledge, good is the indirect means.

MEYPPORUL NAYANAR

V. A. DEVASENAPATHI

[Dr. V. A. Devasenapathi, M.A., Ph.D., is Professor of Philosophy, Advanced Centre of Philosophy, University of Madras. It is in the life of the saints that we find the truths of our scriptures being verified, and but for such illustrious examples the truths would have remained only abstract ideas without any method of being proved. In the life of the saint, which the author has depicted here in a lucid and simple manner, we see the two characteristics prominently coming to the fore, viz., forgiveness and adoration of the devotees of the Lord.—*Ed.*]

HINDU theism has a tradition of worshipping the devotees of the Lord, placing them on a par with him. This does not mean that there is an inadequate conception of the greatness of the Lord or that there is a blasphemous exaltation of the devotee to the rank of the Deity. A devotee, par excellence, is one in whom the light of the Lord shines most clearly ; hence all honour to him. Besides, the Lord is more pleased when His devotees are respected than when He Himself is the object of adoration.

The Tiruttondar Purāṇaṁ which relates the history of the devotees of the Lord is called the Periya-purāṇam — the great purāṇam — because of the greatness of its theme. Verily, the devotees are great because their love for the Lord is great, illimitable. Among these devotees, some worshipped the Lord directly while others worshipped Him in His devotees. To the latter class belongs Meypporul Nayanar.

Meypporul Nayanar was a chieftain whose capital was in Tirukkovalūr (S. Arcot). He made his rule secure by overcoming all his enemies. He was a wise and benevolent ruler. It was his special aim in life to serve the devotees of the Lord without waiting for them to express their desires openly. The form of the

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devotees of the Lord was the constant object of his contemplation. He found in the devotees his mainstay.

There was a neighbouring ruler who suffered defeat at the hands of Meypporul Nayanar on many occasions. Unable to gain victory on the battlefield, he played a trick. He dressed himself up as a devotee of the Lord and, with a satchel in one hand, he went to Tirukkovalūr. Seeing him in this guise and knowing their chief's love for devotees, none stopped him from gaining entrance into the palace. As he tried to get into the room of the chieftain, the personal attendant stopped him saying that his master was asleep. The devotee-in-disguise brushed him aside saying that he had something important to convey to the chieftain. The queen, on seeing him enter woke up the chieftain. When the visitor told the chieftain that he had a rare Āgama given by the chieftain's Lord and that it must be given in secret, the queen was sent away. As the chieftain bent low to receive instruction, the enemy achieved his nefarious aim with his knife, hidden in the satchel. The personal attendant who had suspected foul play rushed in to find his master in a pool of blood. As he drew out his sword to punish the murderer, the chieftain whose life was ebbing away, stopped him with the words : "He is our own" and asked his servant to conduct the enemy to a place of safety outside the city. When the attendant returned after carrying out the order, the chieftain advised those around him to cherish love for the sacred ashes and to safeguard their religion. He prepared for his end by meditating on the Lord of the dance-hall at Chidambaram. The Lord was pleased to appear before him with His consort and grant him the bliss of residing at His feet and worshipping Him.

The Periya-purāṇam is a challenge to us to realize the significance of the lives of the saints it describes. In the present case, even when faced by physical extinction, thanks to the treachery of a devotee-in-disguise, Meypporul Nayanar's faith in devotees was unconquered. This is brought out by the expression, "Vellumā miha valla" (வெல்லுமாமிக வல்ல) used to describe this devotee.

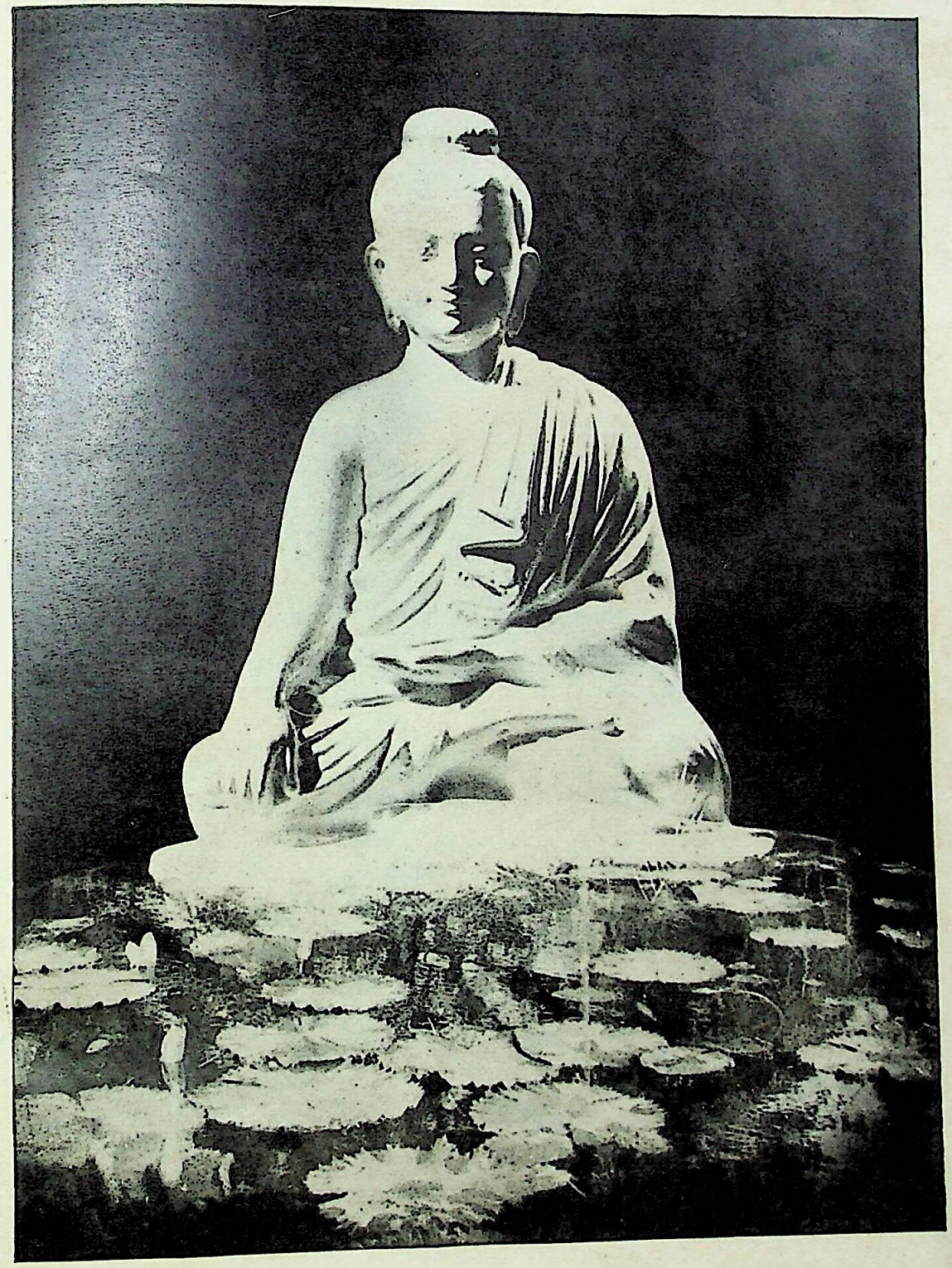
The Śiva Jñāna Bodham enjoins the Jīvanmuktas 'to worship as Hara Himself the habit of those who abound in devotion, and His shrines'. This makes it obligatory even for Jīvan-muktas to worship the devotees with as much fervour as they have in worshipping the Lord. In fact, in the Periya-purāṇam itself, we have an account of another devotee, Viranminḍa Nāyanār who was responsible indirectly for making Sundarar sing his Tiruttoṇḍattagai (the account of the lives of the sacred devotees). It is said that when he noticed Sundarar passing by the place where the devotees had gathered, without offering salutations to them, he declared that Sundarar as well as His Lord were aliens to the devotees. The Lord had to inspire Sundarar to sing about the devotees. If Sundarar had gone without saluting them, it was not out of disrespect but out of a feeling of unworthiness in their presence. The Lord Himself gave Sundarar the first line for this composition.

If Jīvanmuktas are asked to be in the company of devotees, the point to be understood is that while devotees deepen one's love for the Lord, those who are not devotees, bring one back into ignorance. Hence the need for the company of the devotees.

The Lord Himself says of the devotees : 'In greatness, they are like unto each other ; because of their devotion to Me, they have gained Me ; they overcome the world by their steadfastness (one-pointedness of devotion) ; they suffer from no deficiency ; they are well poised in an excellent state ; by their love they enjoy happiness ; they are beyond all states of duality'.

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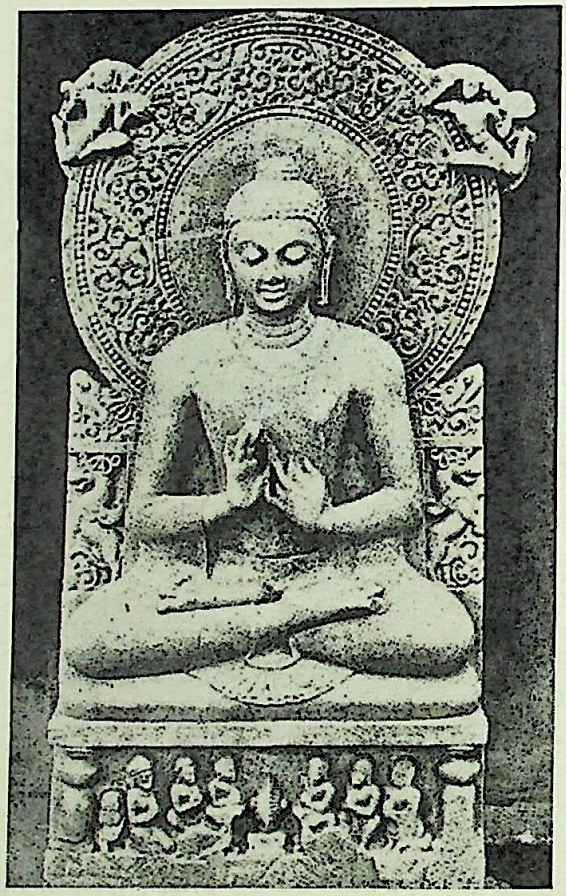
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GAUTAMA BUDDHA

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Buddha in Dharma-cakra-pravartana-mudra
Sarnath

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THE LIFE AND PERSONALITY OF BUDDHA

VISHWANATH PRASAD VARMA

[Dr. Vishwanath Prasad Varma, M.A., Ph.D., Director, Institute of Public Administration, Patna University, Patna has in this paper exhaustively dealt with the life of the Buddha as a spiritual leader who actively and intensely strove to preach religion. He deprecates the idea of looking upon the Buddha as a mere social and democratic revolutionary.—*Ed.*]

THE historical and sociological approach to the study of religions seeks to trace the social, economic, political, cultural and intellectual background of a religious movement. The legacy of the environment cannot be minimized. A study of the diverse types of situational trends and the network of ideas current at the time that the founder of a religion appears is essential for a historical investigation. The different religions of the world like the Egyptian, the Babylonian, the Chinese, the Greek, the Jewish and the Christian have been studied from this historical point of view and significant propositions have been arrived at. The historical and sociological methods may be applied to the study of ancient Indian religions also. Hegel has familiarized us with the notion that the great men are only the spokesmen of the dominant 'ideas' of the age. The nebulous ideas of the day find their crystallization in the great man. But Hegel is mistaken in minimizing the creative role of the world-historical individual by stressing too much on their being the embodiment of the World-spirit (*Weltgeist*). A great historical personality does have significant and superior vision to understand the forces of the age. Hence a world-historical individual cannot be regarded as the mere product of the age. There seems to be vital truth in the saying that great men are as much the creators of their era as created by them. There is interaction between both. It is said that if there would have been no Luther, some one else would have produced the Reformation but about the Coronation of Charles the Great, it is said that if there would have been no Charles, there would have been no Coronation and the history of the Middle Ages would have been different.

It is true that the historical and sociological approach with its emphasis on environmental determinism and the consequent diminution of the creative role of the great religious leaders seems to destroy the organic unity of a religious teaching and it also tends to wound the sensitive feelings and emotions of the devout religious soul. The pursuit of this method is essential, nonetheless, in the interest of higher knowledge and comparative criticism. But the resort to this method should not imply the minimization of the genius of the great founders of religions. A great personality does powerfully respond to the social, economic and political forces of the day and does incorporate into his teachings many elements from the preceding and contemporary network of ideas but the final shaping and the explicit mode of formulation of the system do bear the impress of his genius. Buddhism also was a product of the times and it does derive many of its concepts and propositions from the previous thinkers and the prevalent corpus of ideas and it does also react to the forces current in the environment of the day but no one can deny that the Buddhistic movement does bear the greatest powerful impress of the personality of Buddha. The derivation of ideas from different sources is not the primary thing. What is important is the dynamic evaluation of the specific element taken from different sources for the role they are to play in the new systems. The impact of personality is shown in the final shape that the ideas assume in the organic structure of the thought-system and there can be no doubt that Gautama Buddha was not only one of the greatest figures pro-

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duced by the Asian world but was also an epoch-making world leader and prophet.[1]

The life and personality of Buddha indicate the profound impression made on his mind by the way of living of the ascetic monk dedicated to *pravrājyā*.[2] There is no doubt that some of the fundamental elements of the contemporary Brahmanical cult and philosophical ideas were subjected to destructive criticism by Gautama Buddha but his personal life of renunciation of the comforts of home life, at the early age of twenty-nine, shows that in his emotional make-up he was a Hindu of Hindus.[3] The prospects of rulership in the land of the Sākyas [4] failed to attract Gautama and he embarked on the path of homeless wandering, contemplation and asceticism, thus dedicating himself to the pursuit of *nirvāṇa* and emancipation, and obtained final enlightenment at the age of thirty-five. It would have been possible for Gautama to combine political rulership and philosophical pursuits and adopt a career similar to that of Janaka, Aśvapati Kaikeya and Ajātaśatru of Kāśi. But his disenchantment with the ways of the mundane sphere was deeper. He renounced his ancestral inheritance, hearth and home, wife and only son for the realization of the path to the deliverance from the miseries of 'birth, old age, sickness and death'. He became a wandering ascetic. In the later Buddhist literature we get moving descriptions of his cutting his locking hair with a sword, his parting with his charioteer Chanda and his first visit to the town of Rajgir. Like the students of spiritual wisdom of the day he sought knowledge from two teachers Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta.[5] But the contemporary philosophical gnosis did not satisfy him and hence he took to the path of askesis. Tapas and Yoga as paths to knowledge have a long history in this land and Gautama turned to them.

The Buddhist records indicate that the six years spent by Gautama in serious self-castigations and penances were almost entirely useless and that they only convinced him of the futiliy of that path. According to these records, supreme enlightenment dawned on Gautama on the very first night of the forty-nine days spent beneath the sacred tree.[6] But

[1] Paul Dahlke, a great admirer of Buddha says in his *Buddhist Essays*, p. 19: '. . . already, almost two and a half millenniums ago, the supreme summit of spiritual development was reached, and that at that distant time, in the quiet hermit groves along the Ganges, already had been thought the highest that man can think . . . For higher thought there is not than that Buddha-thought which wipes out the world, and with it its bearer'.

[2] Edmund Hardy, *Der Buddhismus nach altern Pali-Werken* (Munster, 1890); R. Spence Hardy, *A Manual of Buddhism: In its Modern Development* (London, 1880).

[3] Both Gautama on the one side and Plato and Aristotle, on the other, would condemn the appetitive sensuous life led by the vulgar (*pṛthagjana* of Buddhism). But while the Greek thinkers are content only with a philosophic contemplation of ideas or an intellectual contemplation of God (*theos*), Buddha was far more trenchant in his advocacy of the austere code of life and conduct and *samadhi* for a person who wanted to attain *nirvana*. The best and virtuous life, according to the Greeks, could be realized only in the perfect polity. But Gautama stressed the significance of *arhatta* for its own sake. He is far more individualistic in his attitude than Plato. While the perfect guardians are trained in dialectics and take a keen interest in the defence of the country, the *arhat* is an expert in art of the four (or sometimes five) *dhyanas*. The key concept, however, in the Buddhist way of life is not God-realization or identity with the supra-cosmic *brahman* but emancipation.

[4] D. B. Spooner regarded Buddha to be of Iranian descent while V. A. Smith held that the Lichchavis and the Sakyas were Mongolians. (Noted in Saunders, *Gotama Buddha*, p. 11 ff.)

[5] In the Upanishads one gets some famous teacher-student relationships. Yama instructs Nachiketa, Sanatkumara instructs Narada and Angira seeks instruction from Bharadvaja. In one of the Upanishads Uddalaka instructs his son Svetaketu and according to another Svetaketu questions his father about *pancagni vidya* and when the latter fails to answer him, they both go to Ajatasatru for knowledge. These seekers are satisfied with the revelation of the supreme esoteric secret. Gautama never comes across any acknowledged champion of Advaita wisdom during the course of his studentship. His own previous teachers could not win his intellectual adherence although he gave a place to their teachings in his elaborate eightfold methodology of *rupa* and *arupa dhyana*.

[6] In the previous Upanishadic tradition also we find that for the pure in heart the mere utterance of the supreme truth is enough to secure final realization. According to the *Katha Upanishad*, Nachiketa obtains supreme enlightenment even while Yama is narrating to him the mystic transcendental truths. But it seems more logical to hold that slowly the mind and heart are prepared for the reception of illumination than to think that a sudden dawn of spiritual knowledge is possible.

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it may be pointed out that mystics, not only in India, but in several other countries have recognized that physical askesis and even deliberate self-torture is a path to spiritual enlightenment. The Jaina prophet Mahavira also attained omniscience due to the practice of tapas.[7] The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* also refers to *tapas* as one of the four (the others being *satya, samyak jñāna, brahmacharya*) techniques for the realization of supreme reality. Thus it appears more logical and psychologically convincing to hold that the vital elements of the cardinal Buddhistic truths must have been dawning upon Gautama's mind during this long period of six years of self-discipline and beneath the sacred Bodhi tree only the final crystallization[8] was obtained. H. G. Wells has recognized this psychological fact and he says : 'When the mind grapples with a great and intricate problem, it makes its advances, it secures its position step by step, with but little realization of the gains it has made, until suddenly, with an effect of abrupt illumination, it realizes its victory'.[9]

After the attainment of illumination, for forty-five years till the attainment of *mahāparinirvāṇa* at the ripe age of eighty, Buddha devoted himself to teaching the populace the truths that he had found out.[10] This programme of constant itinerary that Buddha took up after his final enlightenment is somewhat comparable to the life of the Greek Sophists and the Yayavaras and Parivrājakas of the Indian tradition. In the Upaniṣads there is the recognition of the monastic life but regular spiritual tours are not contemplated there. Even if the Vratyas of Eastern India are considered to be the proto-type of Sādhus, it is not certain that they carried on intellectual and spiritual propaganda. But in the Tripitaka literature we certainly find some Parivrājakas who led a wandering monastic life.

But even if we may find some evidences for individual wandering monastic teachers in the Upaniṣads, the overwhelming pattern there is that seekers of spiritual truth, as for example the Brahmacharins of Yajñavalkya, study and meditate under a particular teacher. Mahavira and Buddha, on the other hand are the great examplars of wandering monastic life. Except for the four months of the rainy season (*chāturmāsya*) Gautama was constantly on tour and his life was absolutely dedicated to the dissemination of truth and wisdom. The famous places associated with his wandering career are Sārnath,[11] Rājgir,[12] Gaya,[13] Śrāvasti

[7] The six years of intense asceticism undergone by Buddha have their parallel in the one hundred and one years of rigorous *brahmacharya* of Indra spent at the Ashrama of Prajapati.

[8] Describing the illumination of Gautama the early Buddhist records say :

'When the conditions (of existence) reveal themselves
To the ardent contemplating Brahmin
To earth he casts the tempter's hosts,
Like the sun, diffusing light through the air.'

This comparison of the illumined person to the sun is also found in Plato's *Republic*, Book VIII and the *Bhagavadgita* (*teṣām ādityavat jñānam*).

[9] H. G. Wells 'The Rise and Spread of Buddhism', *The Outline of History*, p. 392.

[10] There are many common points between his teachings and the contemporary Brahmanical philosophy. T. W. Rhys Davids says : '. . . Gautama was born and brought up, and lived and died a Hindu . . . There was not much in the metaphysics and principles of Gautama that cannot be found in one or other of the orthodox systems, and a great deal of his morality could be matched from the earlier or later Hindu books. Such originality as Gautama possessed lay in the way in which he adopted, enlarged, ennobled and systematized that which had already been well said by others ; in the way in which he carried out to their logical conclusion principles of equity and justice already acknowledged by some of the most prominent Hindu thinkers. The difference between him and other teachers lay chiefly in his deep earnestness and in his broad public spirit of philanthropy'. Oldenberg (*Buddha*, p. 52), also says : '. . . it is certain that Buddhism has acquired as an inheritance from Brahmanism not merely a series of its most important dogmas, but what is not less significant to the historian, the bent of its religious thought and feelings, which is more easily comprehended when expressed in words.'

[11] At Sarnath he delivered his first sermon to the five disciples — Kaundinya, Vappa, Bhaddiya (or Bhadrika), Mahanaman and Assajit.

[12] At Rajgir there lived Sanjaya the wandering heterodox ascetic. His two disciples Sariputta and Maudgallana were converted to Buddhism or better, accepted the discipleship of Gautama. At Rajgir the famous First Council (*samgati*) after Gautama's death was also held. — *Le Concile De Rajagrha : Introduction to the History of the Canons and Sects of Buddhism* (Paris, 1st Part, 1926, 2nd Part, 1927).

[13] At Uruvela in Gaya the three Jatala brothers were received into Gautama's fold. They were Uruvela Kassapa, Nadi Kassapa and Gaya Kassapa. They were fire-worshippers. Fire-worship is referred to in the *agni-vidya* of the *Kathopanishad*. Fire-worship was also practised by the Zoroastrian priests.

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etc. Once he made a visit to his home town Kapilavastu. His father and aunt accepted his teachings. The latter, even joined the Samgha. While at the ancestral palace, in his home town, he visited also his wife. His only son Rahula asked him for his Patrimony and Buddha ordered a Bhikku to admit him to the Samgha.

Not only did Buddha deliver sermons and hold conversations generally with seekers of knowledge and sometimes also with adversaries, most of whom are recognized in the Buddhist literature as having eventually accepted his path (*marga*), but he also organized the Samgha.[14] K. P. Jayaswal holds that the Buddhist Samgha was a consummation brought about by the application of the ideal and practices of political republicanism to a religious group.[15]

Gautama Buddha had a very austere but magnetic personality. According to the Buddhist records, his physical person was robust. He had the thirty-two marks of the 'great man' on his person.[16] Early in his adolescent years also he is represented in the *Buddha-charita* to be a powerful warrior and archer. His vigorous and powerful physique enabled him to undergo the severe strain of penances and asceticism. Even after he had attained enlightenment he continued to lead a very active life although perhaps not as hard as between the years twenty-nine to thirty-five. He roamed throughout the regions of almost the whole of modern Bihar and Uttara Pradesh. He maintained full physical vigour till the age of fifty-six. At fifty-six, some strain of advancing age was felt and he sought the assistance of Ananda, the beloved disciple and also a cousin. His walking tour, nevertheless, continued and even at the age of eighty he could undertake the journey from Pataliputra to Kusinagara on foot, although he was not well and was suffering from a stomach-ache. It is evident, thus, that a powerful and strong body did immensely aid Gautama in the pursuit of his religious preaching.[17]

Gautama Buddha had a serious and dignified bearing. Never in the Buddhist scriptures is he ever represented as indulging in excess of emotions. He never laughs and never does he yield to tears. He speaks only a little and always speaks in set measured terms.

But in spite of his deep austerity and exalted bearing there were, certainly, human touches in him. He has a soft corner for Ananda, he goes to visit his father and his wife and son at Kapilavastu and he accepts the exhortation of his aunt Mahāprajāpati Gautami to open a female branch of the Samgha (*bhikkuni samgha*).

At the time of his death his attitude is absolutely unperturbed. To the anxious importunities of Ananda not to give up his physical body, he answers by a short discourse on the inevitable dissolution of all constituted entities.

As a teacher he resorted, to a certain extent, to argumentation and discussion. The Upaniṣadic teachers like Pippalāda, Bharadvaja, Aitareya and Uddalaka also engaged in such discussions. But besides the dialectical[18]

[14] C. A. F. Rhys Davids in *Sakya or Buddhist Origins*, London, Kegan Paul, Trench Trubner & Co., 1931, has emphatically elaborated the distinction between Sakya-ism and Monastic Buddhism which developed two or three centuries after Gautama and represents the views of the editors of the Pitakas. Sakya-ism would have been represented by the oral teachings of Buddha and his co-workers. She has pointed out three fundamental distinctions between Sakya-ism and Monastic Buddhism: (i) Dharma meant to Gautama an inner guide, to the monks external doctrines; (ii) Marga meant to Gautama a way for personal elevation, to the monks the eight-fold path; (iii) Nirvana meant to Gautama the extinction of passions, to the monks the extinction of a man's self.

[15] K. P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, considers the birth of the Buddhistic movement as the birth of organized monasticism in the world. C. A. F. Rhys Davids thinks, on the other hand, that originally the Sakya movement was a lay movement and monasticism is a later development.

[16] In the later Buddhist tradition, Gautama is considered to be *lokottara*, extraordinary, above all worlds, and even superior to the gods.

[17] In the Buddhist accounts Gautama is credited with *riddhibala* or extraordinary miraculous powers. He certainly rebukes his disciples for the display of superhuman powers. But he himself displays miraculous powers at Sravasti to vanquish the six heretical teachers. He is credited with having made a three-months' stay in heaven.

[18] The Vedic Samhitas employ the method of enunciating in verse statements about gods, cosmos and man. The Brahmanas, like the Satapatha, con-

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method of advancing propositions and counter-propositions he also resorted to lecturing or delivering a full-length discourse, as for example, the *dhammachakkapavattana sutta*, the *ādiptaparayāya* etc. This method of delivering discourses, he, probably, either himself discovered or borrowed from the practice of the speakers in the republican moot halls (*santhagara*) of the day.

Gautama Buddha was not much interested in the social and political problems of the day. He did not deliberately embark upon the mission of social reform but since he operated in a socio-political-economic framework, social, political and economic teachings did occasionally emanate from him. Some of his ethical concepts also had social and political implications. But primarily he was an ethical teacher, inculcating a psychological method of moral reformation and a way of emancipation from suffering. He rejected the ritualism [19] and the ceremonialism of the day, he found unsatisfying the path of the ascetics who insisted on physical austerities and he maintained silence regarding the metaphysical doctrines of unity with *Brahman*.

It is wrong, however, to characterize early Buddhism as merely 'ethical idealism'.[20] It is true that ethically-oriented right conduct is praised in this system but *śīla* is only one element in Buddhism. Gautama, himself, did not attain enlightenment merely by the meticulous observance of the minutest rules of conduct. He engaged in deep contemplation and meditation. He stressed that the way to the cessation of suffering is the *nirodha* of *avidyā* and *nirvana* is attained by *prajña* and *samādhi* and not merely by *śīla*. Hence along with moral purification, psychological gnosis and meditation are considered the techniques of emanicipation (*vimutti*).[21]

Gautama did learn some significant processes of meditation from two of his teachers — Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta. But he claimed to have gone further in that path. Hence when, on his way to Sarnath from Gaya, Upaka Ajivaka asked him, as to who was his teacher, Buddha said that he had attained supreme enlightenment (*bodhi*) by his own efforts. Hence in his teachings he constantly stressed self-culture, personal endeavours and self-development and wanted people to be *ātta-dīpa* and *ātta-śarana*. In the contemporary social and religious systems too much emphasis had been placed upon dependence on external godheads. Although the Upaniṣads proclaimed the doctrine of monistic idealism, in practice, the people must have been dependent on their chosen deities and rendered worship to them. To such a people much too prone to dependence on external gods, Gautama Buddha inculcated absolute reliance on personal endeavours and a devoted pursuit of rigorous ethical discipline. He was of the view that by sustained and dedicated efforts, man could reach a status higher than that of even the gods. From this stress on personal endeavours it appears that Buddha

tain elementary expositions of the sacrificial system. The Upanishads employ the method of argumentation but they suffer in point of methodological dialectics to the dialogues of Plato. The Buddhist dialogues are short in comparison to those of Plato. They are also more cryptic and dogmatic than the compositions of Plato. Hence, in spite of a deeper spiritual and mystical appeal, the Upanishads and the Tripitakas do not give that evidence of sustained intellectual creativism as do the dialogues of Plato.

[19] Because of his critical attitude towards the popular and Brahmanical religion of the day Gautama is, at times, regarded as a rationalist. His rationalism is fundamentally different from that of Kant. The Kantian rationalism originated as a reaction against the empiricism of Bacon, Hobbes and Locke and the scepticism of Hume. But early Buddhist rationalism was aimed against the revelatory and intuitional foundations of sacrificial Brahmanism.

[20] According to Albert Schweitzer, *Indian Thought and its Development*, the greatness of Gautama Buddha consisted not in his theoretic insight but in his spiritualization of world-and-life-negation and in his breathing into it a spirit of ethics. He also says that Buddhism makes its own the ethical acquisition of Jainism. According to tradition Buddha took recourse to a double language — to the simple man he taught moral doctrines and he propounded philosophy and even esoteric teachings to the more learned.

[21] A. A. Macdonnel, *Lectures on Comparative Religions*, regards Buddhism as an offshoot of Brahmanism and says that philosophically, Buddhism might have derived from the Samkhya but 'It is really on what may be called its religious side that Buddhism is original'. The first, second and third Aryan truths are philosophical while the fourth is religious.

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was a very clean and honest prophet and did not intend to initiate any personal cult of his own. Neither did he claim to act as an intermediary between man and God.

So long as Gautama lived, his personality was the greatest bond holding the disciples together. If they sought to surrender themselves to him that required only a formal declaration that they accepted the *dhamma* as propounded by the Buddha.[22] But later on, after the passing away of Buddha, acceptance of the supremacy of the Samgha was also made vitally essential.[23] It, seems, possible, nevertheless, that the formula of triple surrender is a part of original Buddhism.[24]

Sometimes it is said that although a great ethical teacher, Buddha did not venture into the field of metaphysics. In the *Aggivachchagotta Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikaya,* Vachchagotta raises ten questions :

A. Referring to Matter—

(1) The worlds are eternal.
(2) The worlds are non-eternal.
(3) The worlds are finite.
(4) The worlds are infinite.

B. Referring to Soul—

(5) The soul is identical with the body.
(6) The soul is different from the body.
(7) Tathagata is reborn after death.
(8) Tathagata is not re-born after death.

C. Referring to Rebirth—

(9) There is both rebirth and not rebirth.
(10) There is neither rebirth nor non-rebirth.

Buddha refuses to answer these questions which are called *avyākṛta.*[25] His refusal to answer them, is not simply based on the ground that they do not foster moral growth (*nirveda* and *upaśama*) as is ordinarily supposed, but also on the ground that they do not lead to *abhijñā* and *sambodha* and *nirvāna* that is, they do not foster illumination. In other words the refusal is based on the non-availability of the answers to enhance morality and emancipation. Gautama claims that he reveals only the *dṛṣṭa* (his realization) and disclaims having any dogma (*dṛṣṭigata*).[26] During the course of the discussion, at one place Vachchagotta says that he has been caught by ignorance and delusion (*sammoha*). But eventually he agrees that the tenets of Gautama are free from branches, external forms or solid material forms but are existent only in pure essence.

But although Vachchagotta is silenced it can be pointed out that even if the answers to the first four and the last four questions may not be ethically profitable and that these questions may even be unanswerable from the metaphysical standpoint still the fifth and the sixth questions do demand an answer from the ethical standpoint. A discussion of the question whether the soul is identical with the body or different from the body does have considerable ethical relevance. The hedonism of the Charvakas and the sensationalism of

[22] Louis de la Vallee Poussin, seems incorrect in saying that Buddhists from the beginning regarded Buddha as a god although Gautama taught other doctrines. Poussin, *The Way of Nirvana,* p. 30, says : 'Buddhism has been, from the beginning, a religion, a religion properly so called, that is, there have been, from the beginning, Buddhists for whom Buddha was a god and who did not hope for a better state than rebirth in Buddha's heaven, but this Buddhist religion has nothing or little to do with the most authentic teaching of Sakyamuni. Old Buddhism is essentially a discipline of salvation.'

[23] Benimadhav Barua, *Prolegomena,* has discussed the 6 stages of the development of early Buddhism as a religion : (i) The organisation of the Samgha. Hence two sets of teachings were required : (*a*) *lokottara* and (*b*) *lokiya* ; (ii) Rules of conversion were laid down. Hence religious sanction was provided to *Patimokkha* ; (iii) Seniority by age was admitted. Formerly there was only the acceptance of seniority by merit ; (iv) There was the organisation of *bhikkhus* in something like a caste ; (v) *Pindadana* was justified ; (vi) Ghost-stories were composed as stories, for example, in the *Vimana-Vatthu* and the *Petta Vatthu.*

[24] Even in the *Iti-vuttaka* Gautama is regarded as a saviour 'One who sees me sees the truth'. Western scholars are puzzled by the simultaneous acceptance in later Mahayanism of the concept of *anatman* and the worship of the Buddha.

[25] Sometimes the Ten *Avyākṛtas* are compared to the Kantian Four Antinomies and the concept of the unknowability of the *Ding-an-sich.*

[26] Melamed, *Spinoza and Buddha,* complains against Buddha's 'lack of outspokenness about metaphysical principles' which earned him (Buddha) the reputation of being an atheist.

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some other materialistic philosophers are based on the identification of the body and the soul. The Jaina stress on extreme asceticism and non-injury (*ahimsa*) is based on the metaphysical belief that all substances are animated by souls, the only exceptions being *dharma, adharma, pudgala* and *ākasha.* Thus the examples of the Charvakas and the Jainas are enough to point out that the ethical doctrines of the day were rooted in metaphysical notions. Hence I do not think that Gautama was justified in ruling out the discussions of the identity or otherwise of the soul and the body. Ethical distinctions get a firm root only when the separation of the body and the soul is posited.[27] A settled conviction on the immortality of the soul is a dominant counterpart of the belief in the efficacy of moral action because it teaches that no wicked action would ever remain unpunished and no good action would lapse unrewarded. Hence it is not sound from the standpoint of ethical enquiry to rule out discussions of these *avyākṛta* problems. They have significant connections with the analysis of problems of ethics and emancipation. The refusal to answer them, unfortunately, does give rise to an occasional suspicion that either Gautama was an agnostic[28] or that he did not have any settled metaphysical notions[29] or that he was not an expert in the discussion of abstruse problems of ontology.[30]

Gautama Buddha's life and personality have been variously interpreted.[31] But I regard it as rash to consider him a social and democratic revolutionary who acted as the spokesman of the Kshatriyas against the Brahmins and also the great supporter of the downtrodden and suppressed sections.[32] By and large, his personality impresses me as that of a spiritual and moral teacher who wanted to transmit the holy Aryan path leading to *nirvāna.*

Although in its later manifestations Buddhism became a separate religion and even a separate Church,[33] in the beginning it worked within the fold of the contemporary religious systems of the day. Nevertheless, it is clear from the Tripitakas that Gautama had dreams of the ever-spreading propaganda of his religion. He was a great spiritual giant, and although he was humble enough to say that he had only revealed the ancient[34] Aryan way and not initiated any new gospel, it cannot be denied that his personality was that of a missionary. He was not confined to his cloister and did not lead the life of an isolated monk and philosopher. He established the

[27] Melamed, *Spinoza and Buddha,* p. 259, refers to the deep metaphysical roots of Buddha's concept of suffering.

[28] A. Berriedale Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon* (Oxford University Press, 1923, pp. 45, 63) regards the Buddha as a 'genuine agnostic' who did not have a clear conclusion regarding metaphysical questions.

[29] A. B. Keith, 'The Buddha as a Master Mind', *The Indian Historical Quarterly,* Vol. V, pp. 229 ff., says that Buddha did not have 'definite views' and he had failed to achieve positive convictions even for himself. Gautama accepted the doctrine of 'Indeterminates' and hence he preached an ethical and meditative way of Dhyanas (ecstasy).

[30] According to the *Lalita Vistara,* which is a later account and hence not very reliable for the period of early Buddhism, Gautama had studied the Samkhya-Yoga, the Vaisesika, Hetuvidya (Nyaya) and the Barhaspatya. But there is no mention of his having studied the Karma-Mimansa and the Upanishadic Vedanta. Stressing the spirit of 'metaphysical' construction and classification of Buddha, H. Oldenberg, *Buddha,* p. 180, compares him to the Christian scholastic Origin. Th. Stcherbatsky compares him to Descrates and Spinoza.

[31] Heinrich Kern, *Der Buddhismus und Seine Geschichte In Indion,* German translation by Hermann Jacobi (Leipzig, 1882). Heinrich Kern, *Histoire Der Bouddhisme Dans L'Inde* (Paris, 1901). Melamed, *Spinoza and Buddha,* p. 258, considers Gautama Buddha as a great synthesizer of the same type as Spinoza who synthesized formal modern thought.

[32] Albert Schweitzer, *Indian Thought and its Development,* regards Buddha as a free thinker because he opened his monastic order even to the Sudras.

[33] Carl Friedrich Koeppen, *Die Lamaische Hierarchie und Kirche* (Berlin, 1859).

[34] Gautama only claims to have seen an ancient road trodden by Buddhas of bygone ages. *The* Samyutta Nika, 'The City' referring to an ancient road and ancient palace says: '. . . he were to invite the king to rebuild that city, and that city were to become flourishing and populous and wealthy once more. Even so brethren, have I seen an ancient path, an ancient road trodden by Buddhas of a bygone age. . . the which being followed I understand life, and its coming to be and its passing away. . . I have declared same to the fraternity. . . so that holy life flourishes and is spread once more'.

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Samgha and the band of his monastic preachers went out preaching. Gautama had great zeal for religious propaganda and was not a mere spiritual sage calmly preaching the gospel of ethical idealism. According to the accounts of the Tripitakas he is constantly on the move and is filled with a great amount of religious enthusiasm and institutes formal ceremonies for the initiation of monks and laymen into the 'order' founded by him. Hence we find that along with a keen interest in psychology and ethics, Buddha prescribed rules with minute and meticulous details about the conduct of *bhikkus* and *bhikkunis*. Thus it is clear that his was a very comprehensive and many-sided personality.

PRASTHANA-TRAYA

or

The Supreme Trinity of Scriptures

K. PANCHAPAGESAN

[Sri Panchapagesan, M.A., is a retired Professor of Mathematics and a scholar in Sanskrit. Herein he has given the main theme of the scriptural trinity of the Hindus.—*Ed.*]

PRASTHANA-TRAYA means a combination of three things, elements or factors that make for victory in the journey of a traveller, hero or pilgrim who is marching towards a desired goal. In the Hindu scriptural tradition, it refers to the triple grouping of the highest philosophical literature which supplies the needed spiritual food for the pilgrim soul. This literature comprises the Ten Principal Upaniṣads, the Brahma Sūtras of Veda Vyasa and the *Bhagavad Gītā*. These three constitute the highest canonical authority for Hindu Dharma and Hindu Philosophy and have come to be justly regarded as the *Supreme Trinity of Scriptures*.

Of these, the Upaniṣads are the records of the spiritual experiences of seers and Rishis who have directly intuited the ultimate Reality which is the first cause of the Universe.

The *Brahma Sūtras* embody the reflections of sage Vyasa discussing the evidence of the Upaniṣadic seers and reducing his conclusions to short statements in the form of Sanskrit aphorisms. These aphorisms, by the very pattern of their composition, express a maximum of thought in a minimum number of words.

The *Bhagavad Gītā* is the well-known, world famous Song of Sri Krishna communicating the highest truths of Philosophy and Yoga to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra.

These three scriptures, though apparently different in form and garb, have a strikingly common theme to formulate and elucidate for the benefit of the seekers of the highest Knowledge. They essay towards the One ultimate Reality which is the Origin of the world on knowing which, in its entirety, man becomes free, enlightened and immortal. This Reality is called Brahman in the three scriptures and the science concerning its study is called Brahma Vidyā.

In the Ten Principal Upaniṣads, this Brahman is presented in all the fullness of Its infinite glory and greatness. In the *Īśa* Upaniṣad, it is presented as the Spirit Universal that envelops the whole world.

īśavāsyaṁ idaṁ sarvaṁ
yat kiṁ ca jagatyāṁ jagat

In the *Kena*, it is presented as the power behind every activity of nature and of man.

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śrotrasya śrotraṁ
manaso mano yad vāco ha vācaṁ
sa u prāṇasya prāṇaḥ

In the *Kaṭha*, it is revealed as the 'ancient, effulgent being, the indwelling spirit, subtle, deep-hidden in the lotus of the heart'.

taṁ durdarśaṁ gūḍhaṁ
anupraviṣṭaṁ guhāhitaṁ
gahvareṣṭhaṁ purāṇaṁ

In the *Praśna*, it is the fathomless ocean into which all created beings compounded of Life and Matter (*Prāṇa* and *Rayī*) finally empty themselves like flowing rivers losing their name and form.

sa yathemā nadyaḥ syandamānāḥ
samudrāyaṇāḥ samudraṁ prāpyāstaṁ
gacchanti, bhidyete tāsāṁ nāma-rūpe.

In the *Muṇḍaka*, it is the target that is hit by heroes of faith and knowledge who know the art of fixing the arrow of the individual self to the bow of the divine syllable Om.

praṇavo dhanuḥ, śaro hyātmā,
brahma tallakṣyaṁ ucyate.

In the *Māṇḍūkya*, it is pure Unitary Consciousness beyond the states of waking, dream and deep sleep. It is ineffable peace. It is the Supreme Good. It is One without a second.

ekātma-pratyaya-sāraṁ,
prapañcopaśamaṁ, śāntaṁ,
śivaṁ, advaitaṁ.

In the *Taittiriya*, it is the sheathless sheath of Pure Bliss transcending the physical, vital, mental and intellectual planes of existence.

ānando brahmeti vyajānāt
ānandaṁ brahmaṇo vidvān
na bibheti kutaścana.

In the *Aitareya*, it is the source, sustenance and end of the universe shining as Sublime Consciousness untrammelled by the phenomenal adjuncts.

prajñā-netro lokaḥ,
prajñā pratiṣṭhā,
prajñānaṁ Brahma.

In the *Chandogya*, it is the Subtle Essence or *Sat* in which the identity between the individual Self and the universal Self is completely realized.

aitad ātmyaṁ idaṁ sarvam,
tat satyaṁ, sa ātmā,
tat tvaṁ asi, śvetaketo, iti.

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, it is the dearest of all things and the Inner Ruler controlling all beings from within.

ātmanas tu kāmāya
sarvaṁ priyaṁ bhavati
eṣa ta ātmāntaryāmyamṛtaḥ.

It is also the changeless Supra-Cosmic Reality — called *Akṣara* which baffles all definitions and descriptions.

etad vai tad akṣaraṁ gārgi,
brāhmaṇā abhivadanti,
asthūlaṁ, anaṇu, ...

Thus the Upaniṣads give the earnest reader certain clear glimpses into the nature of the ultimate Reality which when closely studied and reflected upon, leave two outstanding impressions requiring to be blended into one *Finale*.

Passages such as *satya-saṁkalpaḥ ākāśātmā sarva-karma sarva-kāmaḥ*. . . . speak of the Brahman as the Highest Spiritual Being with all attributes of perfection; whereas passages such as *asthūlaṁ, anaṇu, ahrasvaṁ, adīrgham* . . . treat of Brahman as the Absolute without attributes.

The *Brahma Sūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa purport to effect a synthesis between these two conceptions of Brahman and help to point the way to restore the unity of religion and philosophy by considering all relevant views on the allied problems of Cosmology, Theology, Psychology and Eschatology held by the greatest thinkers of the age, and discussing

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their merits and defects in the light of the Upaniṣadic teaching.

Reflecting on the Nature of the Supreme Brahman in B.S. III. 2. 22, Bādarāyaṇa points out with significant emphasis that 'The Clause "*Not This, Not This*" negatives the two forms, limited and unlimited, of Brahman and not Brahman Itself; the basic *śruti*, "*tasya haitesya puruṣasya rūpaṁ*" in the first instance mentions the Puruṣa or the Cosmic Being having the two forms and also accents the Supra-Cosmic Absolute (*śatyasya śatyaṁ*) in the ultimate analysis. This view seems to be of a piece with Sri Ramakrishna's famous declaration of his own experience that 'God has both Form and no Form'.

The *Bhagavad Gītā* further fathoms the unfathomed depths of Brahma Vidyā and tells us in unmistakable terms that Brahman as such can be neither called *sat* nor *asat* — but in Its aspect as Īśvara, It has hands, feet and eyes everywhere and watches and controls the whole cosmic process.

'na sat tan nāsad ucyate'
sarvataḥ pāṇipādaṁ tat
sarvato 'kṣi śiro mukhaṁ.

What is more, the *Gītā* propounds a profounder and more living philosophy and brings home to the reader the perennial significance of Īśvara coming down in human form and playing the role of a friend, teacher and saviour in man's moments of trial and crisis.

This view of Divine Incarnation is also in perfect accord with the Upaniṣadic teaching:

ajāyamāno bahudhā vijāyate
tasya dhīraḥ parijānanti yoniṁ.

which gives a peep into the secret of avatarahood explained in Chapter 4 of the Song Celestial in the memorable words:

saṁbhavāmi ātma māyayā
saṁbhavāmi yuge-yuge.

MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(*Continued from page* 67)

is quite clear. I feel it. But how that "I" is, I do not know.'

Lātu Maharaj: 'That is what I say, you know it, you feel it; but that knowledge is so vague, so covered up, mixed up, with lots of other things that it *almost* amounts to ignorance, it is not "blossoming up" to your satisfaction. A vagueness, an uneasy overcasting, is always around it.'

The teacher: 'Why so? Why is this "blossoming forth" not taking place?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Why? Because of this accumulated dirt that has covered it. Have you not seen it in some shops at Mechuvabazar? There are glass jars filled with various coloured liquids What the workers there do is like this: They take a pot, full of dirt, and dip it in one of the jars and give it a rub, it is clean and glossy. They dip it in another jar and it takes the colour of silver or of gold. Similarly the dirt that has covered up our knowledge of "I" is to be cleared first; then the knowledge will shine forth; all uneasiness, all misunderstanding will vanish for ever.'

The teacher: 'How to clean it, Maharaj?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Dip it, dip your mind in the jar of Lord's name. Then all dirt will fall off. Then dip it in the jar of Lord's grace. You will see how beautifully your nature will shine forth. Now the dirt has accumulated in the mind, unless it is cleared how will your "I" be mirrored on it. And do one thing. In this world, in your dealings with it think yourself as gold and not any base metal, as the genuine thing and not an imitation; you will have less of worries and troubles and more of peace and bliss. The more you think

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yourself as the genuine thing the less will you be troubled with things that pertain to imitations. The more your mind will dwell on the genuine knowledge of the "I" the greater bliss will come to you. And this genuine knowledge will clear off all dirt-coatings over it. For this "I" is the Ātman.'

The teacher: 'But Ātman is all-pervading, whereas "I" is limited.'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Yes, true. But that does not matter much. You will see that the "I" which is now appearing as small is not really so. For the present, however, think of this. Jasmin is such a small flower. In the morning you see a dew drop deposited on it. How does it catch (the reflection of) the sky that is infinite? Even so though the "I" (as it appears) is so limited, still because of the dew-drop of Lord's grace on it, it can catch the reflection of the infinite Ātman. (And when the reflection is understood as such the genuine Ātman flashes forth.)'

The teacher: 'How can the Lord's grace fall on us, Maharaj?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Control the two things, tongue and sex, and meditate on the Lord and be charitable, you will get His grace quicker than you think.'

In these few words, the mystery of all spiritual practices is clearly expressed. The idea expressed is the whole of spiritual *sādhana*.

* * *

By the end of 1908 the Udbodhan Office was shifted to its newly built house. Lātu Maharaj did not attend the celebration there. This conduct of Lātu Maharaj became a matter of talk among the devotees of the Master. Many asked him point blank: 'Maharaj, you were invited there, how is it you did not go there?' Lātu Maharaj generally did not give any reply to this question. One special day the same question came up again, but in a slightly different form. A devotee asked him, 'Maharaj, (Holy) Mother is living there at "Udbodhan". Why do you not stay there?' Lātu Maharaj replied, 'Do you think Mother is living only there. Is she not here? Wherever I will sit and call her she will reveal herself there. Because I have not gone there, will Mother cease to be mine for that?'

When Lātu Maharaj was living at Balarambabu's house he would often go to Girishbabu's house for a walk. Many sadhus, Rakhal Maharaj, Baburam Maharaj, Sarat Maharaj and others would be present there. There would usually be jokes and banters. A few householder devotees also used to come and join in the merriment. This particular day the present author also happened to be there. A few random quotations will give us an inkling into Lātu Maharaj's humour.

Rākhāl Maharaj: 'When one is incarnated, takes up a body, one is to suffer. These sufferings are the taxes, so to say, one has to pay for being allowed to live in the body.' Immediately after, a wasp came and stung Rākhāl Maharaj below the left ear. Girishbabu applied lime paste on the spot, which lessened the pain to a certain extent.

Lātu Maharaj quipped in, 'Too quick a payment of the tax, I see.'

Sarat Maharaj, many times, used to cut jokes with Lātu Maharaj and say, 'Sādhu, will you repeat that *mantra* of yours "Money is virtue, money is action, money is the greatest austerity. In a house where there is no money there is nothing, all empty sound, all empty sound".' Lātu Maharaj used to say, 'Really, for a householder to earn money is his primary duty. Being a householder if one fails to acquire wealth what virtue would he practise? A poor householder is almost a contradiction in terms.' One day Sarat Maharaj said to Girishbābu that he had run into debts on account of the construction of the new building for the Mother. 'If even the interest is not paid in time I should fail in keeping my word. This has become a real worry to me.' Lātu Maharaj chuckled and said, 'Just see, Sarot, the power of my *mantra*; it has caused even a *sādhu* like you to worry. Now say if you would admit the truth of my oft-stated *mantra*.' Sarat Maharaj said in jest, 'Would you say I would get money if I admit your *mantra* to be true?' Lātu Maharaj: 'First you admit, money will come later.'

Sarat Maharaj: 'See to it, Sādhu, that your words do not come untrue.' Lātu Maha-

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raj : 'No, Sarot, never ; you will see it.'

Then Sarat Maharaj turned to Girishbābu and said, 'You have heard what our Sādhu has said. You are a witness to this.' Girishbābu smiled and said, 'Why this fuss of witness and all that. Let me make this Sādhu's word come true now and here.' Saying this he brought out some money from the fold of his waist cloth and handed it over to Sarat Maharaj. There was general laughter.

One day two pandits came to Girishbābu's house and there was a discussion about truthfulness. Now one of them had the bad habit of using the Bengali word *sālā* very often. The word literally means a brother-in-law ; but it is generally used in the sense of the English word 'rogue' which, in spite of its bad meaning, is a term of endearment, and sometimes it means nothing. So this pandit, in the course of the discussion, said, 'Sālā, if one cannot keep his word, how could he stick to truth ?' Lātu Maharaj knew the pandit and his habit. He laughed and said, 'Now, sir, you have called him a *sālā* you must marry his sister and keep your truth'. The room resounded with uproarious laughter.

Another day Girishbābu said something and Lātu Maharaj supported him by quoting a rhymed proverb : 'Have control over your mind, tie the rogue tightly, never relent in the least. Leave future to the future ; brother remain wide awake in the present'. Girishbābu said, with a smile 'What ! Sādhu, you are talking in riddles'.

Lātu Maharaj : 'Yes, how else will (your drama) *Kālāpāhād* be complete in all aspects (and attract people)?' (The reference is to Girishbābu's depiction of Lātu Maharaj, as one of his characters in the play by that name. This had reached Lātu Maharaj's ears ; and the above remark is in answer to that.)

A few more instances of his wit and humour we give below :

A gentleman had an inordinate desire and habit of instructing others about spiritual matters, but himself was leading an ordinary householder's life. On one such occasion when he was waxing eloquent on the topic of *bhakti* Lātu Maharaj cited the following couplet : 'O Tulsi, how can you get *bhakti* in this world ? Three things are desperately standing against it — copper coin, skin (desire for enjoyment) and the belly (hunger)'.[1]

A few doctors used to come often to Lātu Maharaj while he was at Balarambābu's house. One day three of them came at the same time. At this Lātu Maharaj said with a smile, 'How is it that three doctors have come here together ? I suppose Chitragupta[2] has taken a long holiday'.

Dr. Kanjilal : 'It is a good season for health in Calcutta now. There are few cases of illness.'

Lātu Maharaj (*still smiling*) : 'So three of you have come to me to get our good wishes ; but I will not wish that.'

Dr. Kanjilal : 'No, Maharaj, we have not come here to ask for evils to society. Do you take us to be so base as to wish such evils to society, simply because we are practising physicians ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'No, no, it is not like that. Who can detest your profession ? What blessings you bring to your patients ! From what pain do you relieve them ! Master used to recommend the modern doctors' treatment. He would say, "Now it is not *dasa-mulpanchan* (Ayurvedic medicine), but allopathic treatment, such as fever mixture". So how can we speak ill of your profession ?'

Dr. Chunilal Basu : 'But he also used to say that doctors' money comes of handling filth. And we have heard that he could not accept their money.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Look here. Why he said that and on what occasion should be taken into account to come to a correct understanding of the above remark. When young, Rāmabābu (Ramachandra Dutta) was extremely miserly, he did not like to spend a farthing on good causes. In order to make him liberal

[1] तुलसी इह संसार मे कहां से भक्ति भेट ।
तीन बात से लटपट है, दमडि, चामडि, पेट ॥

[2] Chitragupta, according to Hindu mythology is the clerk who keeps record of the human births and deaths on earth in Yamaloka, the God of Death's court and sends emissaries to bring people immediately after their death to Yama's court to stand trial.

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with his money Master said that. Hearing those words, Rāmabābu thought, "If my money does not come of any use to my *guru* for what am I saving money?" Then he came to Master and asked him what he was to do with his money. Master replied, "Apply this money to the service of the devotees. It will amount to doing service to me." Moreover, he used to accept his money and also food brought by him. Could he do it if he really considered his money as filth-money? Master wanted to remove his miserliness, his attraction for wealth; so he said those words. He did not use them to show his hatred for any profession, but to remove the lucre-limpet attitude from the minds of his devotees. Did you see hatred of any kind in him?'

All who were present, doctors and others, were astonished to hear the above explanation with reference to the context and said they had never thought over the matter so deeply and that it was good that a misconception had thus been removed that day through Lātu Maharaj's mouth. At that moment a messenger came from Girishbābu to tell Dr. Kanjilal that Girishbābu's pain which had subsided, thanks to the doctor's medicine, had increased again. And Kanjilal bowed down to Lātu Maharaj and hastened to Girishbābu's house.

One day a thought (was it a whim?) came to Lātu Maharaj, and he asked this author to write a letter to Swami Abhedananda in New York to send him some money — he was to undergo an operation of the eye for cataract. The Swami in America did not send any money, but an American devotee of his sent some. On a previous occasion he asked for a watch from Swami Abhedananda, who sent him a tail of a rattle snake instead. This tail when shaken, gives a rattling sound like a toy in a child's hand. Lātu Maharaj enjoyed the joke with a grunt, and wrote back to him, feigning pique, 'What, I wanted a watch; and you rogue, has sent me that tail of a rattle snake. Well, well, I will see to it'.

* * *

In 1910 Balarambābu's priest, Ramadayal Chakravarti, got disgusted with the unruly behaviour of his sons and complained the conduct of one of them to Lātu Maharaj. He heard patiently and said, 'Now feel how hard a parent is hit by the wrong conduct of his son. The Lord of the universe, our common father should feel likewise if we, His children, tread a wrong path, as we often do, and do not heed his warning. But though He feels sorry for all that He is the source of mercy, kindness. He pardons us all, and that too times without number. We also, in our turn, should forgive the transgressions of our sons'. Ramadayalbābu kept quiet.

One day Lātu Maharaj was speaking on the great efficacy of keeping company of *sādhus* to the same Ramadayalbābu in Varanasi. Said he, 'Pingala was a prostitute. A momentary company of sage Aṣṭāvakra changed the course of her life outright. One night the sage noticed that this woman was coming out of door every moment with expectant eyes and going back disappointed. He took pity on her and wished, "If she could direct this attention of hers on God what results she could have attained". This wish of mercy of the sage completely changed her life, and she became a great devotee of the Lord. So we say, "Nobody knows through which casual work, thought, wish, or remark of a sage a man's life can get revolutionized, can realize God." Keeping company of saints supplies one with an abundance of such opportunities. Hence man should keep such company by all means. A little bit of grace coming from saints removes great obstacles from one's spiritual path'.

Yes, Lātu Maharaj had whims. But they rose and fell as quickly. One day he had the idea of brass-plating the Master's cot at Dakshineswar. He told a devotee about it and he readily agreed. A few days after when the devotee came to get his final order he had changed his mind and said, 'You know our Master could not touch metal, if the cot is brass-plated it would not look well. Let us drop the matter'.

(To be continued)

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

TRAIN BLASTS IN ASSAM

OVER a hundred lives have been lost and more than two hundred have been grievously injured in the two train blasts that occurred — one at Lumding on the night of April 20, and the other at Diphu on 23rd night, within a space of four days' time — on the North-Eastern Frontier Railways. It is surmised that the blasts may have been due to 'sabotage'. Lying close as it does, to the spot where the Nagas have been active in their destructive and predatory pursuits for a long time now making life for the peace-loving populace of those parts difficult, the surmise may not be far from the truth.

The Naga problem, it seems to us, has been allowed to drag on too long. The presence of foreigners in the region do not seem to hasten the solution as was earnestly hoped for. We wonder what made the Government to raise such hopes in themselves; for if we could learn a lesson from history, we cannot fail to understand that foreigners did not come to the trouble spots in India to bring about reconciliation or peace. Our experience has been quite the contrary. Now, the question is why a third party should come at all into the picture of an internal problem. Perhaps, we will be able to settle our differences if foreign intervention, in the internal questions, is eliminated.

We have now to think seriously about the matter and take action that can effectively stem the tide of terrorism. Unless the Government makes it clear in action that force would be met by force, violence would be confidently met by arms and not by peace talks, things cannot be mended. Mob and terrorists will not understand the language of peace. The Phizo rebellion must open our eyes to this fact. It now depends on how we can move quickly to root out sabotage and meet offensives with strong counter-offensives and maintain 'law and order' despite all costs. When the terrorists or rebels will find that every one of their nefarious moves fails, and when the saboteurs are firmly dealt with and made an example of, then alone will they give up violence.

Let it not be understood by this that we advocate a rule of despotism but having tried all other means and having discovered that peace overtures are met with terrorism there is no other way left of driving sense into the rebels and secessionists than dealing with them as suggested above, without fear or favour.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

MEDITATION ACCORDING TO YOGA-VEDANTA: By Swami Siddheswarananda. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Puranattukara P.O., Trichur Dist. Pp. 187. Price: Rs. 3.00.

Swami Siddheswarananda will always be gratefully remembered for the services he rendered for two decades as a bridge between the East and the West by his ministry at the Sri Ramakrishna Centre in Paris. We have known highly intelligent and critical products of European civilization bowing their heads at the very mention of Swamiji. As an interpreter of the philosophy of Vedanta and the science of Yoga, he may be said to have carried forward in his own way in France the work started by Swami Vivekananda in the West generally. The present book is an English version of a series of lectures, talks and extracts from correspondence, originally issued in French years ago.

As the title indicates, the subject concerns *meditation* both in its philosophical and its practical aspects — Vedanta and Yoga. Swamiji draws attention to the continued tension experienced by most in the present mode of living, especially in the West, and offers the natural way to relieve it. And this way lies in establishing and promoting harmony between the

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workings of the mind, emotions and the physical body. To this end he expounds the science of Yoga as systematized by Patanjali. Naturally, he has taken only the salient features of the Patanjala Yoga and presented it in terms of modern thought so as to be intelligible to an average mind with some sensitivity to the higher values of life.

He analyses the steps necessary for what may be called a moral perfection before one could step into the region of spiritual progression. He underlines the necessity of celibacy — physical and psychological; this is an important part of the purification demanded of every seeker before he is permitted to step into *tapasya* proper. This *tapasya* connotes an effort for transcending the normal human consciousness and growing into a higher or a deeper state of consciousness which is nearer the Divine. Swamiji discusses the different approaches that are possible to man viz., way of Knowledge, the way of Bhakti. We would add the way of Action also.

We notice in these pages a pronounced tendency to depreciate the role and significance of the Knowledge of the Tantra. Possibly Swamiji has deliberately done so in order to discourage the Western mind from being drawn to a subject full of pitfalls for the unwary.

There are many practical hints and instructions for the practice of Yoga in these talks. His remark that in *asana* it is not the posture of the body that is of primary importance but the stabilisation of the right poise in consciousness, is very revealing and deserves to be pondered over. Again, *maya*, he points out, is not a power of illusion but the Shakti of Brahman. This too is a much-needed corrective to popular thinking on the matter. His warning that meditation shall not develop into day-dreaming but should be assiduously cultivated into a means of increasing identification with the higher Reality is very pertinent.

A notable addition to the growing Ramakrishna literature.

M. P. PANDIT

FRENCH

L'ESOTERISME KURDE. par Nur Ali Shah Elahi. Traduction etc. par Dr. Mohammad Mokri. Editions Albin Michel, Paris. 18.00 F.

It is not generally known that the Kurds inhabiting the hilly regions of Iran and Iraq have a developed esoteric religion of their own. They belong to the Shia section of Islam in their external practices but their initiates are wedded to a *Religion of Truth* in the gnostic tradition. The present text gives glimpses into the doctrines of this sect and is written by Nur Ali Shah Elahi, a contemporary Teacher wielding powerful influence. It has been made available to the public for the first time thanks to the painstaking labours of Dr. Mokri extending over ten to fifteen years.

There is much striking resemblance between the Indian accounts of the Creation, the transcendence and the immanence of the Divine, the progress of the soul upwards through a succession of births step by step etc. and the cosmogonic descriptions given in this text. None can mistake the identity between the originating Waters of Creation as described in these pages and the *apraketam salilam* of the Veda. Similarly the Pearl here recalls the Hiranyagarbha of the Upanishad.

An interesting treatise for students of comparative religion and mysticism.

M. P. PANDIT

KANNADA

PANCHADASI: Translated and annotated by Swami Adidevananda. Publishers: Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mysore-2. Pp. 528. Price: Rs. 12.00.

In his able introduction Swami Adidevananda discusses the oft-raised question whether this work is by Vidyaranya wholly or in part but leaves the question open. He gives a brief outline of the career of Vidyaranya (14th Century A.D.) and proceeds to give an analytical summary of the work chapter-wise.

As the title signifies, this epitome of the Advaitic thought consists of fifteen chapters which can be conveniently studied in three pentads, viz: Vivekapanchaka, dealing with Brahman as Sat; Deepapanchaka, dealing with Brahman as Chit; Anandapanchaka, dwelling upon Brahman as Ananda. As Swamiji points out, the whole work is based upon the thought of the Upanishads and seeks to arrive at a harmony of the main lines of their philosophy. It is an exercise for the intellect to follow the argument in these chapters. The editor's notes and literary translation are helpful for the right understanding of the text. His tracing of the sequence, step by step, is specially valuable.

A notable addition to Advaita literature in Kannada.

M. P. PANDIT

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVA PRATISHTHAN, CALCUTTA-26

REPORT FROM APRIL '64 TO MARCH '65

The Ramakrishna Mission Seva Pratishthan (A General Hospital) has the following departments:

1. Antenatal care, 2. Hospital confinement, 3. Treatment of gynaecological cases, 4. Treatment of medical, surgical, E.N.T., eye, skin and dental cases for men, women and children, 5. Child care, 6. Training in nursing and midwifery, 7. Public Health Programme, 8. Family Welfare Planning Centre and 9. Post-Graduate teaching and research.

22,669 outdoor cases and 1,394 indoor cases were

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treated in the Antenatal Care. The number of Hospital confinements was 5,024, during the year.

There are 33 beds for the Gynaecological cases. The number of the Gynaecological cases treated in the indoor and outdoor departments was 604 and 8,849 respectively. 405 major and 408 minor gynaecological operations were performed.

The total number of Medical, Surgical, E.N.T., Eye, Dental and Skin cases treated in the outdoor department was 41,333 of which 16,844 were new cases. Out of 42,228 cases treated in the Indoor Department 1,673 were new.

Child Care: 407 premature babies were treated during the period. 1,120 cases of babies delivered abnormally and instrumentally or found weak due to other reasons were treated in a separate ward. Preventive care of infants and following them up for at least a couple of years is done by the Postnatal Clinic. The Paediatric Section treated 540 children upto seven years of age.

133 students were on the roll in the Nursing and Midwifery Training and during the period under review 4 Senior and 29 Auxiliary Nurse-Midwives passed the final examination. Groups of nurses, under the guidance of qualified staff, visited 291 urban and 296 rural families respectively and advised the people on their health and medical problems, besides collecting the necessary data from them.

Besides conducting outdoor clinics, the Family Welfare Planning Centre was doing intensive work in an area, near the hospital having a population of 50,000.

The Hospital undertakes research work on medical subjects from time to time.

The Calcutta University has recognized the Ramakrishna Mission Seva Pratisthan as a unit of the University College of Medicine for Post-Graduate teaching and Research. In view of this recognition a few doctors are pursuing post-graduate studies at the Hospital for M.O., M.D. and M.S. degrees.

The Management expresses its thanks and gratitude to the members of the medical staff. It also thanks the Central and State Governments for their recurring grants, and the donors and benefactors and others who have helped the institution.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MYLAPORE, MADRAS-4

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1965-66

The Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home consists of three sections the High School, the Collegiate and the Technical. The boys are accommodated in two groups in separate buildings, the High School and the P.U.C. students forming one group and the Technical and the Degree Course students the other. The total number in the High School group was 167 and the number in the other group 132.

The High School is entirely residential and the boys admitted therein are given free boarding and lodging in the Home. Most of the students in the Collegiate Section while having their boarding and lodging in the Home pursue their studies in the Vivekananda College.

The Technical section has a basic course in Mechanical Engineering and a Post Diploma Course in Automobile Engineering. The former is entirely residential while for the latter students are admitted only as day scholars.

The Students' Home also runs a Primary School in Mylapore and a Higher Elementary School with hostel facilities for Scheduled Castes and Backward Class students at Malliankaranai in Chingleput District. The strength at the end of the year in the two institutions was 452 (263 boys and 189 girls), and 189 (159 boys and 30 girls) respectively.

The strength as on 31st March 1966 in the different sections of the Home was: High School 152; Oriental School 5; Pre-University and Degree Courses 35 and L.M.E. Course 107.

Moral and religious teaching is imparted to the students by holding classes on the scriptures and by study of the lives of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother, and Swami Vivekananda as also the teachings of the Epics and Puranas.

The Management express their beholdenness to all those who have rendered help to the institution.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, CALICUT.

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD FROM 1-4-'61 TO 31-3-'65

Sri Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Calicut runs (1) a Secondary School, (2) a Lower Primary School, (3) a Students' Home for boys and (4) a Charitable Dispensary.

Other activities of the Sevashrama are cultural and religious such as puja, lectures and classes.

The Secondary School had on its roll the following number of students in the respective years.

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1961-62	594	383	977
1962-63	717	462	1,179
1963-64	730	509	1,239
1964-65	761	521	1,282

Primary Shool

The strength of the Lower Primary School in the period under review was:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1961-62	312	239	551
1962-63	281	207	488
1963-64	296	197	493
1964-65	316	220	536

The number of students in the Students' Home in each year was as follows:—

1961-62	1962-63	1963-64	1964-65
62	69	82	85

The total number of patients treated in the Charitable Dispensary during the period was:

1961-62	1962-63	1963-64	1964-65
39,661	47,120	48,627	46,144

The Management convey their thanks to all friends and well wishers who have helped them in various ways.

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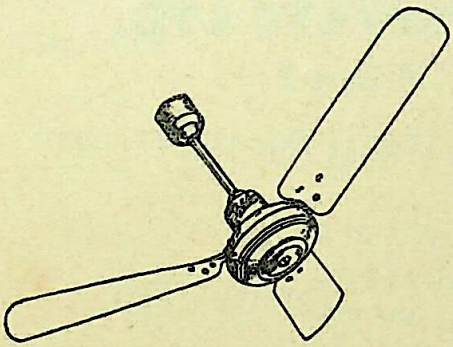
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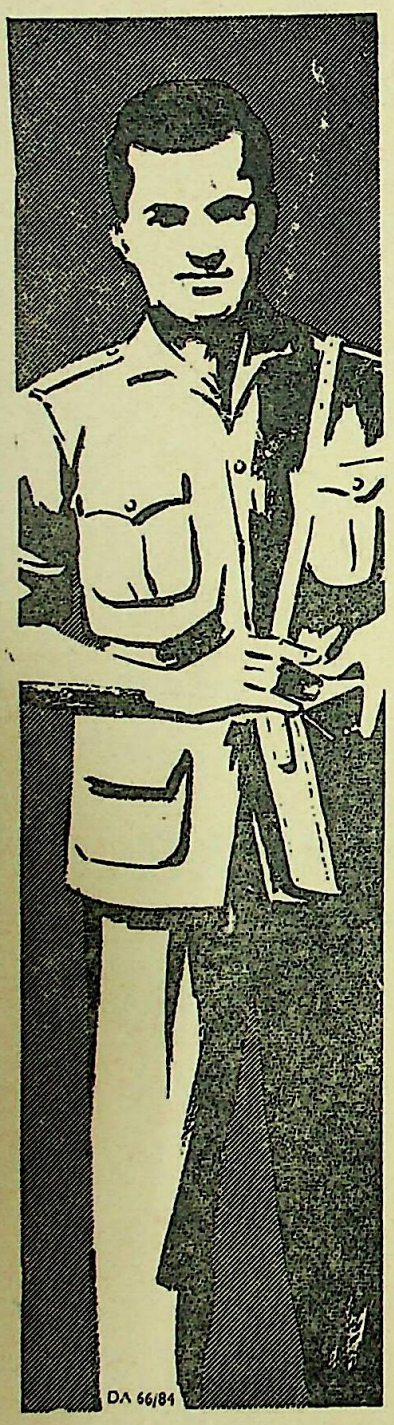
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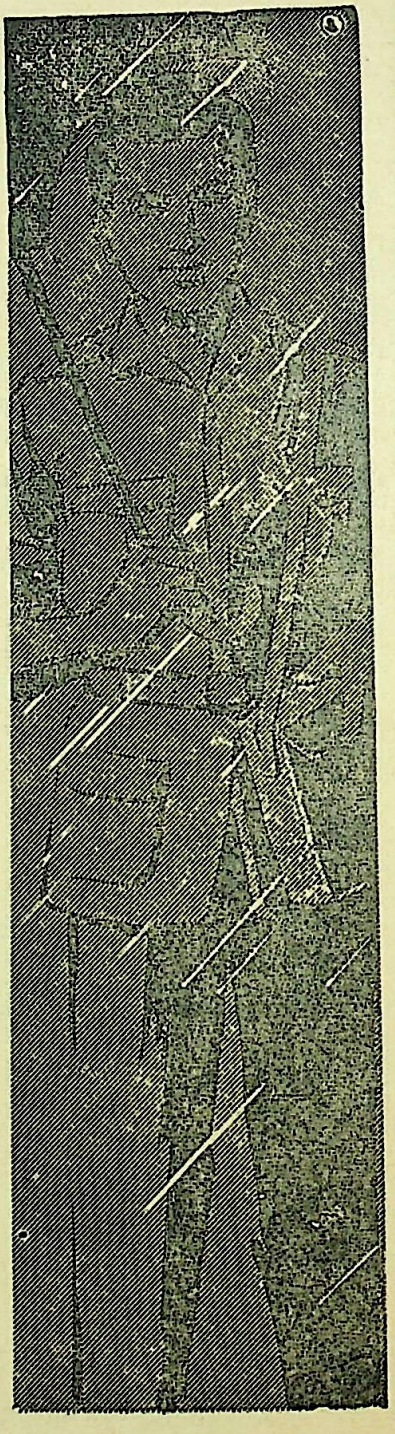
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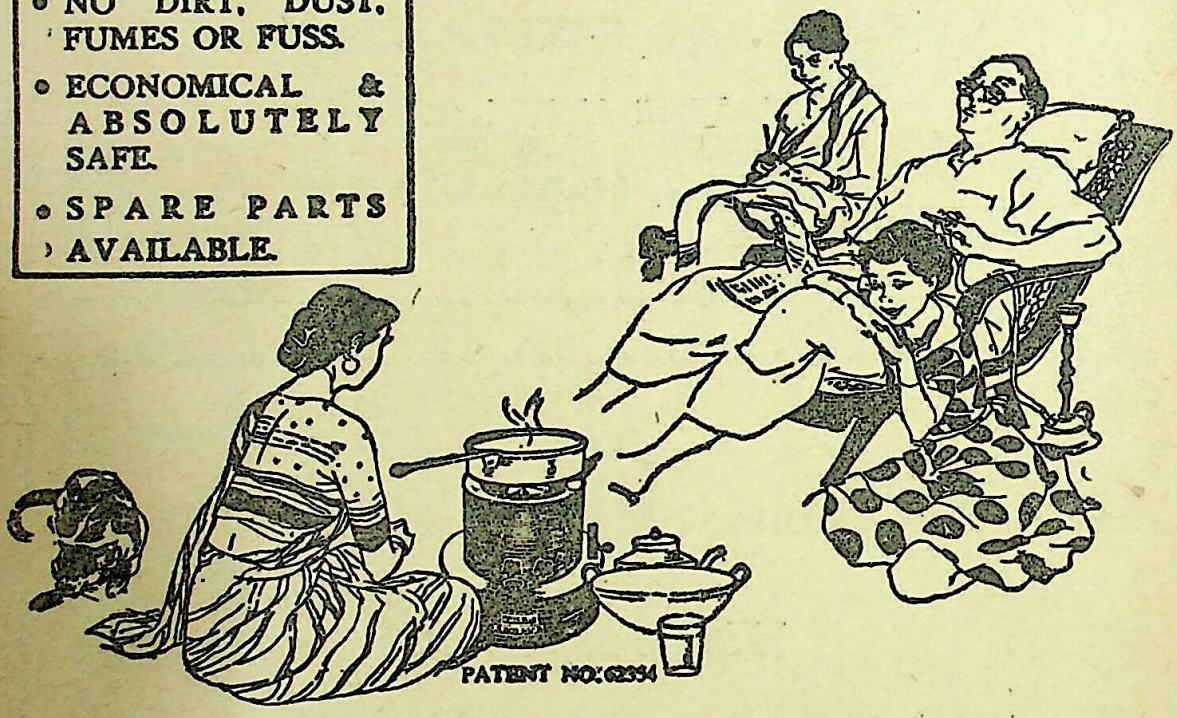
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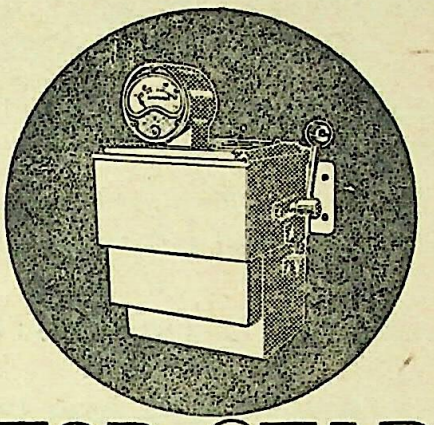
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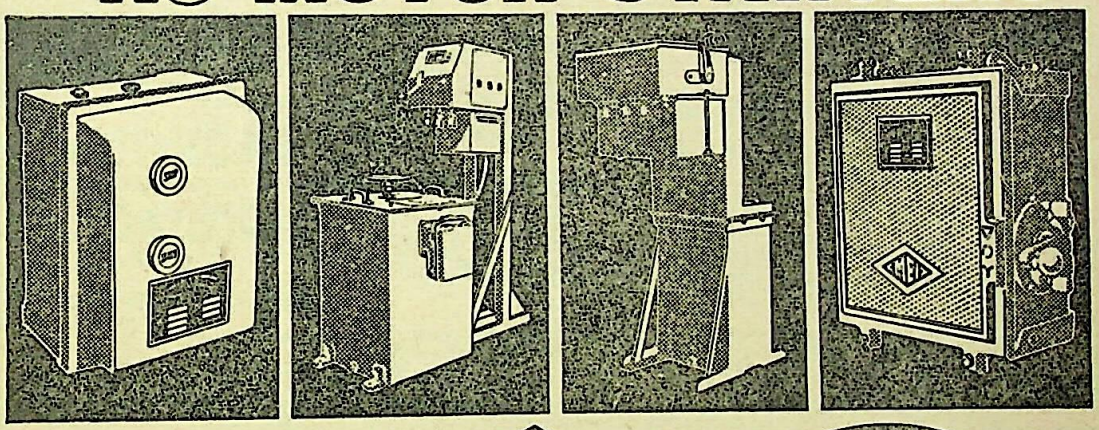
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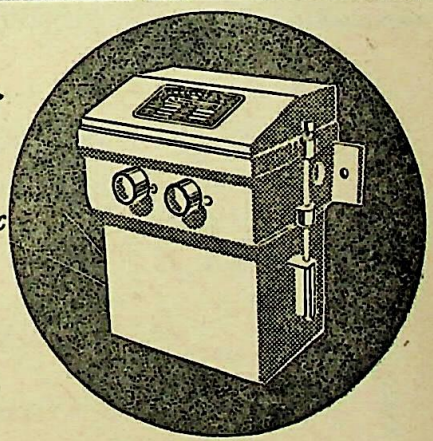


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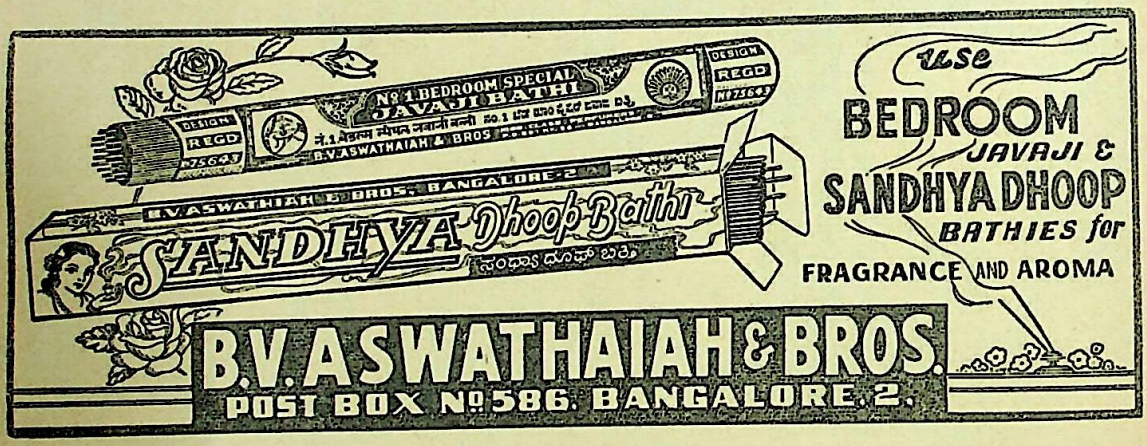
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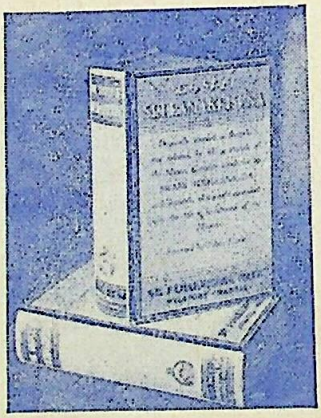
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